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NEW INDEPENDENT BODY TO HELP VISITOR BUSINESSES THRIVE

Association aiming for tourism strategy boost

By **MATHEW BEECH**

mathew.beech@kosmedia.co.uk

MAIDSTONE'S tourism industry is being boosted by the formation of a new independent association.

Businesses – including tourist attractions, hotels and bed and breakfasts – are joining forces to create the Maidstone Tourism Association (MTA).

The goal is to allow businesses to share ideas and to work together to maximise the profit they each receive throughout the year.

And it is hoped if they get the combination right it could open doors to an increase in visitor numbers and the resulting benefit to the local economy.

After the Government's spending review there were fears that the tourism sector in Maidstone could be hit, with marketing budgets being slashed.

Alan Reading, an honorary member of the Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce and the founder chairman of Marketing Maidstone Town & Country Group, said: "The MTA aims to bring together representatives from Maidstone town centre, Leeds Castle, Fremlin Walk, Maidstone Borough Council, B&Bs, hotels and others to try and work together to find out what the others are doing.

"For example, for the Maidstone River Festival, B&Bs and hotels can create a marketing strategy aimed at those people who may need to stay over for it.

"We could put together a leaflet which has all the events in Maidstone on it. This could range from a church bazaar all the way up to the Kent County Show. It will be very useful to



CONTINUED ON PAGE TWO

ATTRACTION: The Archbishop's Palace is part of Maidstone's heritage and history

Festival reveals more big names

HOP Farm Festival organisers have revealed more star names confirmed to appear.

They include former Blur guitarist Graham Coxon, Pretenders singer Chrissie Hynde and ex-James frontman Tim Booth.

They join a big-name line-up which will see the likes of the Eagles, Bryan Ferry, Brandon Flowers and the Human League perform on the Friday, of the two-day event, and Morrissey, Lou Reed, Iggy and The Stooges and Patti Smith on the Saturday.

The festival takes place at the Paddock Wood venue on July 1 and 2.

FULL STORY – PAGE 3

Carton recycling banks available

FIVE new collection banks have been set up to recycle drinks cartons.

The banks will be available at Parsonage Meadow, Headcorn; the library car park in Marden; Morrisons car park in Sutton Road; Tesco car park in Tovil; and Sutton Road in Penenden Heath.

Cartons can only be recycled by taking them to the new carton banks, and must not be put in the kerbside recycling black boxes or green-wheelie bins.

FULL STORY – PAGE 2

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New operation could save the sight of elderly eye patients

By **JENNA PUDELEK**

jenna.pudelek@kosmedia.co.uk

SURGEONS in Maidstone are pioneering a new technique to treat a common cause of blindness in elderly people.

The trial is being carried out by specialists at Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust (MTW) using an epimacular (a thin layer of tissue in the region of the eye responsible for acute vision) radiotherapy technique.

Over the next three years up to 40 patients will be treated at Maidstone, part of a national network of 18 hospitals involved in the research. Wet age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is one of the most common causes of sight loss in older people.

Donald Ross, 75, of Paddock Wood, is among the 250,000 people in the UK affected by the condition. Mr Ross, a tennis coach who continues to teach part-time, took part in the trial this week.

AMD can lead to blindness within months, if left untreated. The seven to eight injections a year needed to treat the condition costs the NHS up to £7,000. In comparison, the new surgical procedure being trialled at Maidstone costs about £6,000 and if it reduces the need for regular injections it could pay for itself within a year or two.

Mr Ross has had numerous injections in his eyes over the past four years to stop the progress of macular degeneration. He had the 45-minute radiotherapy operation under local anaesthetic. A day later, his vision was good.

He said: "I volunteered to be part of



TRIAL PROCEDURE: An operation could save the sight of AMD patients

this trial because I am optimistic that this procedure may mean that I and many other patients will need to have fewer, and perhaps no further injections to save our sight," Mr Ross said. "That is obviously a major benefit to many people, and the NHS."

"The ophthalmic team at Maidstone Hospital are great. My sight is precious to me, and they have saved it."

The trial is being carried out under the licence of Dr Stewart Coltart, a consultant oncologist.

Ear, eye and mouth unit staff have provided the clinical operating support and the medical physics department has the expert scientific and radiation protection advice.

The team is led by Luke Membrey, a consultant ophthalmologist. He said: "The outcome of this trial could have a major impact on the way these patients are treated."

"We perform an operation to remove the vitreous jelly from the

eye, which allows us to carry out radiotherapy in the diseased part of the eye and the published results so far have been excellent."

He said the one-off treatment was provided as a common day case procedure and the hope is that the need for follow-up Lucentis injections will be less frequent.

Mr Coltart added: "We hope that the patient's macular degeneration will be permanently halted, or at least slowed down. We will continue to monitor their progress after the treatment."

"As well as benefiting patients this treatment uses resources much more efficiently."

People interested in participating in the study should visit the study website, www.merlotstudy.com to see if they might be eligible.

If so, people from Kent should request a referral from their GP or eye doctor to Mr Luke Membrey at MTW.

Drinks cartons recycling banks

FIVE new collection banks have been set up to recycle drink cartons.

The banks will be available at Parsonage Meadow in Headcorn, the library car park in Marden, the Morrisons car park in Sutton Road, the Tesco car park in Tovil and Sutton Road in Penenden Heath.

Cartons can only be recycled by taking them to the special new carton banks, and must not be put in the kerbside recycling black boxes or green-wheelie bins.

Each year, UK carton manufacturers produce approximately 55,000 tonnes of paper-based cartons.

This equates to around 2.3kg of cartons per household which

could be recycled instead of thrown in the rubbish bin.

Prior to the introduction of the new recycling banks, residents were unable to recycle these sorts of carton, which are widely used for milk, fruit juices, sauces and other liquid foods and drinks.

The scheme is being introduced in conjunction with Tetra Pak Ltd and the carton industry body ACE UK (Alliance for Beverage Cartons and the Environment). Once collected, the cartons can be recycled into a number of different products ranging from plasterboard liner to high-strength paper bags and envelopes.

Waste manager at Maidstone

Borough Council, Jennifer Gosling, said: "I welcome the carton industry's support in setting up these five new sites. With cartons now being recycled in the borough, even more of our waste will be recycled."

Fay Dashper, recycling operations manager at Tetra Pak, added: "We've been working hard to make carton recycling widely available to everyone across the country. In fact, they can now be recycled across 88 per cent of UK local authorities."

"It's fantastic news that Maidstone Borough Council is taking the important step of adding cartons to the list of materials collected at local recycling sites."

New association boost to tourism

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE everybody to coordinate what they are doing and get the most business from it."

The MTA will allow its members to elect committee members and a chairman, ensuring its independence

and keeping it away from party politics. Mr Reading added: "The independence is important because, while Maidstone Borough Council are an important part of it, the MTA will not be run by one particular group."

"The members of the group will be

the ones who own it. We will want a chairman with no feet in any particular camp, but who has lots of fingers in lots of different pies."

The first meeting of the new association took place yesterday (Tuesday), at Maidstone Town Hall.

Will Miss England be from our town?

A REGIONAL heat to be in with a chance of being crowned Miss England will be staged in Maidstone later this month.

Although the venue and date is yet to be confirmed, organisers say they are expecting a good turnout for the heat which will see Miss Maidstone emerge to battle on behalf of the town for the national title.

Victory could eventually see the lucky winner being named Miss England and giving them the opportunity to make it on to the big stage of the Miss World contest.

A previous Miss England winner included Katrina Hodge, from Tunbridge Wells.

Last year, Chloe Othen, who lives in Maidstone, represented the town in the Miss England 2010 finals.

The 20-year-old is now heading the campaign for the annual event to be held in the town.

Miss Othen said: "I'm very patriotic and am proud to live in Kent and want to put Maidstone on the map."

"There was no contest for Miss Maidstone last year and I was the only Kent girl at Miss England,

By **MATHEW BEECH**

mathew.beech@kosmedia.co.uk

which is a bit unfair as there were only northern girls competing.

"I mentioned this and I am now involved in the Miss Maidstone search, looking for girls aged 17 to 24 to take part.

"I'm hoping to be a judge this year in the Miss Maidstone contest and I hope that will help them out because I know how they feel."

Miss Othen was spotted at the Clothes Show in Birmingham, where a photographer took her picture at the event, which ultimately led to her entry in the Miss England contest.

Despite there not being a Miss Maidstone pageant, Miss Othen took up the title so that she could enter and make the final.

As well as being Miss Maidstone, she is also Miss Kent in the Miss GB pageants and these titles have enabled the 20-year-old blonde to get involved in fund raising events.

Miss Othen said: "It opens up a world of opportunities, including acting and modelling. It is a good title to have. You get the chance to do charity work and last year I even got to help turning on the Christmas lights.



MISS MAIDSTONE 2010: Chloe Othen competed in Miss England

"I'm quite young but I have a voice in Maidstone and it gives you a chance to reach out to people your age. I've done charity work for the Lavender Trust, Help for Heroes, the Variety club and Maggie's Cancer Centre.

"Young people look at what you are doing and then they may think that

More names for hop festival

ORGANISERS of this summer's Hop Farm Festival have unveiled the latest stars confirmed to perform.

They include Blur lead guitarist Graham Coxon, Pretenders star Chrissie Hynde and ex-James frontman Tim Booth.

Other acts confirmed for the fourth annual event in Paddock Wood include Manu Chao La Ventura, The Guillemots, Frankie & The Heartstrings, Damien Dempsey, The Duke Spirit, Kitty Daisy & Lewis, Cloud Control, Goldheart Assembly, The Secret Sisters and Liz and the Ligers.

They join the previously unveiled big-name line-up which will see the likes of the Eagles, Bryan Ferry, Brandon Flowers and the Human League perform on the Friday, of the two-day event, and Morrissey, Lou Reed, Iggy and The Stooges and Patti Smith on the Saturday.

The festival takes place on Friday and Saturday, July 1 and 2.

Previous headliners include Neil Young, Bob Dylan and Paul Weller.

The festival is spearheaded by Vince Power – best known for creating the Mean Fiddler empire. His



SIGNED UP: Graham Coxon will perform at the Hop Farm Festival

record includes spells promoting Reading and Glastonbury festivals.

The Hop Farm Festival trades on a no sponsorship, no branding ticket, boasting that everyone attending enjoys the same experience. There is no VIP area.

Festival boss Vince Power said: "I'm very pleased to announce even more acts. We have so many great bands

on the bill so far and it shows that this year is going to be fantastic."

The festival has four music stages and includes a comedy stage and campsite area.

Tickets are now on sale. Weekend tickets are priced at £130 and day tickets are £70. Camping is £30 for the weekend or £25 per day. Children under 12 go for free.

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'Vulnerable face isolation if free travel is cut back'

CAMPAIGNERS pushing to save bus services have warned of the damaging impact changes to free travel could have on vulnerable people, *writes Marijke Cox.*

Protesters from the Campaign for Better Transport say adjustments to the timetable for elderly and disabled pass holders could leave some at risk of social exclusion.

It followed the announcement by Kent County Council that it could no longer afford to fund free bus travel from 9am on weekdays, and the start time would be pushed back to 9.30am.

It means passengers entitled to subsidised transport will now have to pay if they wish to travel before 9.30am on Monday to Friday.

A council spokesman said for the past three years KCC had provided additional funding to allow pass holders to travel from 9am, but with a significant reduction in Government grants, this was no longer possible.

Concessionary

"As a result, KCC will operate a national standard scheme," he said.

"This means passes will be accepted from 9.30am to 11pm on Monday to Friday and all day at weekends and on bank holidays."

Changes to the concessionary travel scheme started on Friday, April 1.

Sophie Allain, bus campaigner at Campaign for Better Transport, urged the Kent community to put forward their views for the Save Our Buses movement.

She said: "Although half an hour may not seem much, it's important to remember that in rural areas we're talking about buses coming once an hour, or worse, once every two hours."

"This can change the day of elderly or disabled people. Having passes running from 9am helps people get out and stay active, it helps them get to a doctor's appointment and can stop them becoming socially excluded."

"People who make these decisions to cut services don't understand fully the impacts these changes could have."

Minimum

"They're cutting the bus service right back to the minimum."

The Campaign for Better Transport is urging people to submit their comments to help the organisation build a case against the cuts.

"Kent County Council is in a difficult position, and decisions like this are there to be made," said Ms Allain.

"But buses should not just be an easy cut to make. It can create a false economy where money has to be spent later, when people need more help."

"Our campaign looks to show Government the impact these cuts will have. We want to empower people to have a say on this."

Ms Allain said combining factors such as council and commercial bus cuts and the 20 per cent slash to the fuel tax rebate for buses could mean £100 million in funding lost from the network.

"Buses could be tipped into a spiral of decline from which they will struggle to recover."

Anyone wishing to join the campaign can visit www.bettertransport.org.uk/campaigns/save-our-buses.

County escapes major losses in arts funding

By **STEVE KNIGHT**

steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

ARTS organisations throughout Kent have been spared the brunt of a £100 million cut in government funding.

More than 200 groups across the UK learned this week that they would not be receiving a share of the remaining £1.4 billion available through Arts Council England.

But the majority of Kent applicants were satisfied with their three-year settlements for 2012-15, with the county achieving the best share of funding in the South East.

Successful organisations include the Turner Contemporary gallery in Margate, which will receive £1.7m over three years, and Stour Valley Arts in Ashford, which will see an 83 per cent increase to £360,000.

Kent County Council's cabinet member for communities, Cllr Mike Hill, said: "Kent has achieved the best settlement in the South East and we believe this acknowledges the ambition and resourcefulness of Kent's passion for arts and culture."

"Some organisations will fear they have lost out by not being successful and so our arts development unit will work closely with any who now feel they need additional support."

The arts groups that will continue to receive funding will be known as National Portfolio Organisations, and will use the



Picture: TM STUBBINGS

WINNER: The Canterbury Festival will receive £450,000 in funding over three years

investment to develop their own work while sharing their expertise with others.

One such NPO will be the Canterbury Festival, which will receive £450,000 funding over the three years in question.

Director Rosie Turner said: "We are very pleased and relieved that the Arts Council has awarded us a generous amount of funding, which represents an uplift of 36 per cent on our previous core funding position."

"It means the festival will be able to continue to provide high quality international arts events during October."

The Propeller Theatre Company and People United, both also based in Canterbury, are among the charities due to receive Arts Council England cash for the first time.

However, the future looks bleak for the Maidstone-based Disability Arts Development Agency (Dada) South, which will lose all of its funding from 2013.

Dada director Stevie Rice said: "We have heard time and time again about the Arts Council's commitment to diversity, so to withdraw essential funding from organisations working to represent and support diverse artists and their practice is inexplicable."

Arts Council England said it had not followed an "equal cuts for all" policy and had made decisions on a case-by-case basis.

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Little birds' big news for survey

SMALL birds are making a comeback in Kent according to the 20,000 people who took part in this year's Big Garden Bird Watch.

Breeds including the long-tailed tit, coal tit and goldcrest were the worst affected by the harsh winter of 2009-10, but their numbers were up in the county this year.

Organised by the RSPB, the Bird Watch revealed that starlings are the most commonly seen in Kent gardens, followed by house sparrows and blue tits.

Visit www.rspb.org.uk/hfw for more details about the survey.

To see this clip search 'wildlife'
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Yourkenttv's Julie Maddocks finds out about the dedicated work of the Kent Wildlife Trust

April 2, and be transported by boat up the River Stour to Fordwich.

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The Jurassic limestone will be incorporated into the conservation work at the cathedral.

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FRENCH Caen stone will be delivered to Canterbury Cathedral on a horse and cart this weekend.

The stone, used by the Normans to build the cathedral, will travel the same medieval route used by countless traders over the centuries.

It will travel arrive at Sandwich on Saturday,

THE INTERVIEW



BY ED HILL

Artist finally shows etchings

ART has been a major part of Joyce Marriott's life since she was 16, but it was not until her later years that she was able to pursue her passion for etching.

The 86-year-old from Thanet trained at Croydon College of Art during World War Two. She said: "I came from an artistic family. I lived in Blackburn and was halfway through a degree when the art school closed because of the war. My aunt lived in Croydon and said why don't you come down here to train?"

"It was an entertaining move, because there was a lot of bombing at that time, but the college did carry on through the war. I remember going into London one day on the train and as we crossed the Thames a massive bomb dropped nearby. The whole carriage rocked and we thought we would end up in the water. Fortunately, it staggered into Victoria Station and we all got out with our knees shaking."

Unfortunately for Joyce, etching was off the curriculum.

She said: "Because of the bombing, the acid needed for etching was considered too hazardous to have around."

After graduating she was offered a job at the advertising giant JW Thompson, but because of the war effort decided to take up teaching.

Retirement

For the next 40 years it was her main occupation, in diverse places including Africa and Ford Open Prison.

She said: "I went to Uganda with my husband under an education scheme and became a mother of three lovely girls."

"We taught there for 10 years, then came back to this country and I continued teaching until I reached retirement."

Sadly for Joyce, her husband, John then suffered a severe stroke, which meant much of her time was spent caring for him. It was around this time she had the chance to discover etching for the first time.

She said: "Just before I retired I went to two etching classes. A friend of mine gave me a shed and I found an old mangle and started using it as a press. Eventually I got a proper press and started etching more carefully."

Because of her husband's condition, Joyce's art was mainly a pastime, but she continued to explore and develop her own style.

Inspired by cartoonists such as David Lowe, she has created simple line drawings on a diverse range of themes.

She said: "I was brought up with cartoons. My father was passionately political and liked people like David Lowe, who satirised Hitler."

Etching became Joyce's main passion and



PASTIME: Artist Joyce Marriott's etchings cover a range of subjects and styles, inspired by political cartoonists and life around her

it gave the spritely pensioner a new lease of life, developing her work.

She said: "It is a lovely process. It gives you a kind of jerky line and you get unexpected outcomes. Sometimes a little bit of ink it can give the impression of something like a cloud. The best thing is that you can repeat the process. You can try different things every time you make a copy and select the ones that you think really work."

Since her husband died in 2004, Joyce has

been able to devote more time to her art. She has built up a growing reputation and her work has been exhibited not only in Kent but also at the Barbican in London and in galleries in Paris, Germany and for the British Council in Malta.

Now her etchings can be seen at The White Horse Inn at Boughton-Under-Blean. Pub manager Tara Birks had worked with Joyce for an exhibition in Ramsgate and knew she wanted to have her pictures on her walls.

Joyce said: "I am delighted that Tara remembered my work. The pub has connections with Chaucer and ghosts so I think I might get inspired by them."

Joyce said: "Etching has been the joy of my life. When I got fed up with things I could go into my shed and it was my own paradise."

Joyce's work will be on display at the White Horse Inn until the summer.

• See www.whitehorsecanterbury.co.uk for more information.

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Summit called to solve Op Stack traffic chaos

A HIGH-LEVEL summit has been called to find a resolution to Operation Stack chaos and end the traffic misery of Kent's motorists, *writes Marijke Cox.*

Folkestone and Hythe MP Damian Collins told KoS the meeting was vital in reaching a solution to the problem that has been plaguing drivers for the past two decades.

"There have been no serious discussions like this for years and I think if everyone is in one room looking at all the options, things can move forward," he said.

Kent Police's Chief Constable Ian Learmonth, County Hall leader Cllr Paul Carter and the heads of Dover, Ashford and Shepway councils will be attending the meeting on July 8, along with MPs and representatives for the Channel Tunnel and ferry companies.

"This is the right time to sit down and solve the problems associated with Operation Stack," said Mr Collins, who called for the discussions.

Operation Stack involves parking lorries on the M20 between junctions 11 (Hythe) and 12 (Cheriton), with cars directed along the A20. During severe disruption of cross-Channel travel, phase two is implemented which sees lorries also parked



PARKED: Stack blocks the M20

between junction eight (Maidstone) and junction nine (Ashford).

Operation Stack causes the roads around Dover, Shepway and Ashford to become gridlocked, which has led to a subsequent loss of business for local firms. Delays also cost the UK's haulage companies £1 million a day.

Mr Collins said issues such as the way lorries are booked onto ferries must be considered.

He added that the lorry park plan at Aldington, near Sellindge, would no doubt be raised at the meeting.

Kent County Council first proposed a dual purpose Operation Stack and overnight lorry park near the M20 three years ago. Plans were for lorries to be directed to wait at the site when there were disruptions to cross-Channel services.

The overnight park would be able

to hold 500 lorries and if Operation Stack was in place, an overflow area would hold an extra 2,500 HGVs.

Kent Police and the Freight Transport Association supported the proposals. But there was fierce opposition from residents in Sellindge and Aldington who formed the Lorry Park Alliance Group.

Government then announced in January it would not fund the £35m to cover the costs of the park.

KCC may now look to draw up a new plan which could see costs reduced, but still see the park located at Aldington.

The county's branch of Campaign to Protect Rural England, Protect Kent, however, suggested last month that the lorry park be built on reclaimed land near Dover, which it said could hold around 6,000 freight vehicles with minimal impact on the environment.

The upcoming meeting, which is being held at Shepway District Council, will see representatives from the different groups debate the various options.

Mr Collins added: "I'm encouraging the community to write to me with ideas we can look in the meeting."

• **To send in your views email damian.collins.mp@parliament.uk or write to Damian Collins at House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA.**

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Tourism group aiming to help maximise profits

THE tourism industry in Maidstone is set to get a boost, with the formation of an independent association.

A number of businesses, including tourist attractions, hotels and bed and breakfasts, are joining forces to create the Maidstone Tourism Association (MTA).

The goal of the group is to allow the businesses to share ideas and work together to maximise the profit they receive throughout the year.

Following the Government's spending review, there were fears that the tourism sector in Maidstone could be hit, with marketing budgets being slashed.

Alan Reading, an honorary member of the Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce and the founder chairman of Maidstone Marketing, said: "The Maidstone Tourism Association aims to bring together representatives from Maidstone town centre, Leeds Castle, Fremlin Walk, Maidstone Borough Council, B&Bs, hotels and many others to try and work together to find out what the others are doing.

"For example, for the River Festival, B&Bs and hotels can create a marketing strategy aimed at people who may need to stay over.

"We could put together a leaflet which has all the events in Maidstone on it. This will range up from a church bazaar to the Kent County Show. "Everybody can co-ordinate what they are doing and get the most business from it."

The MTA will allow its members to elect committee members and a chairman, ensuring its independence from party politics.

Mr Reading added: "While Maidstone Borough Council is an important part of it, the MTA will not be run by one particular group."

The first meeting is at the Town Hall from 10.30am on Tuesday, April 5.

Children 'must have right to know both their parents'

By **MARIJKE COX**

marijke.cox@kosmedia.co.uk

A BACKBENCH MP is spearheading a campaign to make it a legal right for children to know both their parents.

Dover and Deal representative Charlie Elphicke, one of Kent's newest MPs, raised the issue while introducing his Children Bill in Parliament on Tuesday. He said he wanted to make sure there was a "clear and enforceable right" of a child to grow up knowing both their mother and father.

"There are three million children who live apart from a parent in the UK, about one million of whom have no contact with the non-resident parent three years after separation," he said.

"Too often people say it is about mums' rights or dads' rights, but actually it is about the rights of a child to know and have a relationship with both their parents.

"That is the nub of what the bill is about. It is not right that parents should sink their children's rights to know them in a sea of acrimony when they split up."

Mr Elphicke's proposals are contained in a Ten Minute Bill, which is unlikely to progress into law unless the Government decides to throw its weight behind the measure. MPs use the device as a way of gaining publicity for an issue.

In a timely coincidence to Mr Elphicke's plea, on Thursday new legal powers were



IN THE MIDDLE: Children should have a legal right to know both parents in the event of a split, says Charlie Elphicke MP

granted to grandparents to guarantee them access to their grandchildren in the event of divorce. Separated parents will be expected to make sure grandparents continue to play a part in the children's lives.

To support his bill, Mr Elphicke referred to a soldier who was told by a judge he was "unreasonable" for wanting to see his six-year-old daughter – who was at the centre of a contact battle between the parents – before being deployed to Afghanistan.

"In January, he applied for a specific order so he could see his daughter before he went to serve his country and possibly not come back," said Mr Elphicke.

"The judge said it was unreasonable of

him to ask and he should wait until October, 2011, before the court would resume proceedings [of the original contact case]."

Mr Elphicke, who stressed this was not just about fathers but mothers too, also gave an example of one of his own constituents.

"Mr G of Dover writes to me, saying: 'I understand as they are my children I should help towards their upbringing, but surely this should not just involve paying my ex money and only speaking to them on a Sunday morning for 30 minutes.'"

Mr Elphicke said putting the Bill before the House of Commons was to send a message to the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service; "weak-kneed" judges; and parents with residence orders, that it is about children's rights to grow up knowing both their parents.

An argument raised in response to the bill focused on the welfare of a child in relation to domestic violence.

But campaign group Families Need Fathers praised Mr Elphicke. Chief executive Craig Pickering said: "I am very glad Charlie is contributing to this debate. The Government's review of family justice will affect children and parents for decades to come."

The bill will be considered for a second time on Friday, May 13.

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Town gallery named after Sgt Pepper album artist

THE man behind the famous cover art for the seminal Sgt Peppers Lonely Hearts Club Band album has had a gallery named after him in Gravesend.



The Blake Gallery in the Civic Centre is named after Sir Peter Blake. The artist is best known for designing the cover of The Beatles LP, pictured.

Now his gallery is welcoming its first visitors, after officially being opened by Gravesham Borough Council's director for communities Melanie Norris.

It's an obvious location for the gallery – Sir Peter went to art school in the town for five years. Sadly, he was not able to be at the opening, but does have plans to visit soon, the council said.

Sir Peter, 78, was born in Dartford and had his first solo exhibition in 1960. He went on to become an icon of British pop art. He has often complained he was only paid a £200 flat fee for the Sgt Pepper cover, and no royalties.

Local art group RivArt has put on Maiden Voyage, a free exhibition featuring artists including Adam Pickering, Barbara Blun, Rosalind Munday, Glenn Fitzpatrick, Gino Generoso Napoliello and Liz Howe. It runs until April 29 and the gallery will be open weekdays from 9am to 5pm.

For details call 01474 337896 or email thegallery@gravesham.gov.uk.

Expensive agency staff 'a cost-effective option'

By **STEVE KNIGHT**

steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

KENT County Council leader Cllr Paul Carter has defended the authority's use of expensive employment agencies to secure the services of temporary members of staff.

Last month KoS exclusively revealed how, despite planning to cut 1,500 jobs over the next four years, the council had been paying more than £2,000 per day in agency fees for just three people.

The authority had also made a one-off payment of £165,000 to fund the work of one man, Jeff Hawkins, who has been brought in to oversee an ongoing staff restructure.

But while admitting he would prefer to appoint permanent members of staff, Cllr Carter said it was not always an option.

"There are a number of senior directors who are no longer with us," he said. "We are going through a recruitment process which can take anything from three to six months, if not longer, but we've still got to run the business in that time."

"Sometimes you can fill roles by promoting people temporarily and seeing how they perform, which is always to be encouraged, but when you have significant gaps in your workforce and the experience isn't there to fill them, you have to go outside."

KoS revealed last month how the interim managing director of children, families and education – Malcolm Newsam – has cost taxpayers £1,250 a day in agency fees since January 4, and continues to do so.



NO CHOICE: Cllr Paul Carter defended the use of agency staff

Cllr Carter said: "The interim market is a growing market as the public sector employs fewer people at a high level."

Specialist

"It's a cost-effective way of carrying out specialist assignments. The rates may be higher but you save money by not having to pay for things like sickness, holidays and pensions."

"Jeff Hawkins is carrying out a hugely complicated and time-consuming job in reshaping an organisation that employs more than 35,000 people. That's a bespoke service."

Cllr Carter also refuted suggestions that the chopping and changing of staff would have a detrimental impact on the performance of certain departments, such as the children's social services department, that has been ordered to clean up its act after being rated as "poor" by Ofsted.

"Malcolm Newsam is probably the best person in the country to transform children's services," said Cllr Carter. "He's enormously well-qualified and he's just getting on with the job."

"We were able to get him in very quickly (following the voluntary redundancy of predecessor Rosalind Turner), which is one of the benefits of employing staff through an agency. We didn't have to wait for him to leave his job."

The staff restructure at KCC – entitled Change to Keep Succeeding – has led to a slimming-down in the number of directorates along with a reduction in senior managers.

Cllr Carter admitted the restructure had proved unpopular with several high-paid workers, who have since taken voluntary redundancy.

He said: "There may have been some individuals coming to the end of their careers who enjoyed working in a siloed (airtight) structure and did not have an appetite for change."

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PUMP: Hauliers may protest again

Haulier sunk by fuel prices

By **MARIJKE COX**

marijke.cox@kosmedia.co.uk

FUEL protesters have vowed to continue their fight for lower duty with warnings that haulage firms will be killed off by pump prices.

Leading haulage company Derek Lynch Ltd, in Romney Marsh, is the latest to sink under the pressure of rocketing fuel costs.

Facing European competition and fears of spiralling into debt, owner Mr Lynch took the decision to go into

voluntary liquidation after 33 years in business.

He said: "Since fuel started going up in January 2010, my fuel bill has risen by £20,000. Joseph Rice and Son, which is a haulage firm in Gloucester, closed just before me, after trading for 161 years. This was because of fuel prices.

"We will see more closing. Fuel costs were instrumental in my own decision to close."

Mr Lynch, who helped organise fuel protests in 1999 and 2000 calling for Government to introduce an essential-user rebate for hauliers, said last week's Budget announcement did not go far enough.

Mr Osborne scrapped the 1p increase in fuel duty and cancelled this month's planned 4p rise.

He also announced the introduction of a fair fuel stabiliser, which was a pre-election pledge by the Tories last year.

The stabiliser would see fuel duty fall when oil prices rise.

Mr Lynch said: "This isn't enough. More needs to be done, especially about European lorry drivers coming over here with 2,000 litres of diesel in their tank, driving for free on our roads and taking work from British hauliers. There should be an essential fuel allowance for hauliers. Without this, other firms will close.

"Things will go back to how they were in 1999 and 2000, and hauliers will begin to protest again."

Campaign group Fair Fuel UK, spearheaded by Lib Dem Shepway councillor Peter Carroll and led by former Top Gear presenter Quentin Willson, have been pushing for the Government to introduce a fair fuel stabiliser and cut fuel prices.

The team said the Budget was a step in the right direction, but that prices were still too high.

Recent figures from motoring organisation the AA found average UK petrol and diesel prices had risen by up to 5p per litre between February and March.

Safe sleeping advice for parents of young babies

HEALTH experts have given parents crucial advice on how to prevent cot death.

Representatives from health groups attended Medway NHS Foundation Trust's annual safeguarding day to raise awareness among families and professionals.

Judith Howard, regional development officer for Medway's Foundation for the Study of Infant Deaths, said it was an opportunity for parents to learn how to reduce the risks.

"It's been estimated that if all parents followed the safe sleep advice we could halve the number of sudden infant deaths in the UK," she said.

Medway's NHS director of public health Dr Alison Barnett added: "The safest place for a baby to sleep is on their back, in a crib or cot in their parents' room for the first six months."

A CRASH on the old A249 in Sittingbourne left one motorist dead and another suffering with life-threatening injuries.

The accident involving a blue Ford Escort and red Ford Sierra took place near the McDonald's restaurant at Bobbing services, at about 4.50pm on Wednesday, March 30.

A 28-year-old Sheppey woman died at the scene while an 18-year-old Sittingbourne man was taken into intensive care at a hospital in Romford, Essex. Three other men suffered non-life threatening injuries.

Anyone with information or who saw the crash can call police on 01622 798538.

Golf venue free for fundraisers

CHART Hills golf club in Biddenden is waiving venue fees for companies, societies or groups of individuals wishing to hold fundraising events in aid of the British Red Cross Japan Tsunami Appeal.

Until the end of April, those planning a charity golf day for 10 or more teams of four players can use the venue free of charge.

All event organisers must demonstrate that their golf day will be raising funds to help those affected by the Japanese disaster and that all cash raised will go directly to the Japan Tsunami Appeal.

Course staff will assist with organisation and running the day.

They can also give advice on setting up additional fundraising streams.

Use of all venues is subject to availability, and does not include food and drink costs.

Anyone planning an event in aid of the Japan Tsunami Appeal should contact the British Red Cross by emailing amburton@redcross.org.uk.

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WINTER CHAOS:
Passengers were
left stranded and
without information

Rail firm ordered to Southeastern facing fines

By **MARIJKE COX**

marijke.cox@kosmedia.co.uk

UNDER-fire train firm Southeastern could be fined if it fails to give passengers adequate information about services during disrupted periods.

It follows major problems during the cold snap in December where commuters were left stranded on platforms or on trains with little communication from the operator.

At the time, passengers said they accepted there would be problems during the heavy snow, but they slammed Southeastern for the shocking lack of accuracy and information.

In response to the complaints, the Office of Rail Regulation (ORR) has

proposed to introduce a set of rules, which could see operators fined if they fail to provide sufficient information to customers.

Chairwoman of the group, Anna Walker, said a national survey carried out by independent watchdog Passenger Focus showed only two in five passengers were satisfied with information provided during delays.

"Passengers need reliable information to make and plan their journeys and, with the strides made in communication technology in the 21st century, Britain's rail industry can and must deliver," she said.

"We are all agreed that delivery of accurate and timely passenger information is crucial – particularly so during times of disruption, such as were experienced last winter

when passengers were let down again."

A consultation was opened this week looking at the proposals, and if approved, the changes could be rolled out as soon as autumn.

Ms Walker added: "The consultation launched underpins the rail industry's drive to deliver improved passenger information – clarifying responsibilities and making delivery of plans already in place a requirement with the independent regulator able to take action against any poor performers who let the side down."

Two weeks ago, Southeastern was granted a two-year extension of its contract despite coming under fire for poor service during the winter months and excessive fare increases.

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PANTO DEBUT: Vanilla Ice

'Check out my Hook' –

FORMER pop star Vanilla Ice is set to woo audiences – as Captain Hook in his first-ever pantomime.

The global celebrity will take to the stage in this year's production of Peter Pan at the Central Theatre, in Chatham.

Ice – real name Robert Matthew Van Winkle – rose to fame with his 1991 hit Ice Ice Baby. This and his music video

– which showcased his distinctive dance moves – saw Ice win numerous music awards.

More recently, he was a contestant on Dancing on Ice 2011, and will appear in the UK tour of the programme in April.

He is also filming this year for a new film, and has taken part in numerous reality TV programmes.

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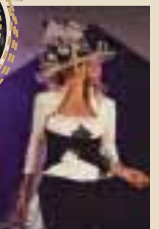
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Photograph by Karl Grant, Camera Press London

improve information if passengers left in dark

MP for North Thanet, Roger Gale, and Rochester and Strood representative Mark Reckless – who experienced the cold snap chaos first hand – called for the operator to be stripped of its contract altogether.

Speaking in response to ORR's proposals, Mr Reckless, who accused Southeastern of treating its franchise as a "cash cow", said: "During the snow in December, information provision was abysmal and I am delighted that in future they may be fined if they continue to let down the travelling public."

Managing director Charles Horton said the company would focus its efforts on improving punctuality and information.

A Southeastern spokesman said as an industry, rail firms know there is more to do.

"Our two priorities are to continue to improve punctuality and information during times of disruption," he said.

"We are already working hard with Network Rail and the industry to ensure that our passengers will see improvements."

The spokesman added that the problems with information last winter were to do with Network Rail's Integrated Train Planning System, which failed to upload the correct timetables, meaning online and electronic boards were incorrect.

A survey by Passenger Focus was used as part of the plans drawn up by ORR, where more than 1,000 passengers were asked to give feedback on rail performance.

Chief executive of the watchdog, Anthony Smith, said passengers

reported chaotic experiences, where some were left standing on station platforms, not knowing when or if a train would come.

"Others told stories of being stranded in unfamiliar conditions in sub-zero temperatures without help and advice," he said.

"If passengers arrive at the station and the service bears no resemblance to the information sourced at home, it is doubly frustrating."

"After last year's snow disruption and the resulting failure to communicate in a timely way to all affected passengers, it is clear that something has to be done."

"Train operators are working to improve the information they put out. This move by the regulator will give the operators an extra incentive to get it right."

Find more news and sport updated
www.kentnews.co.uk

Vicious attacker is jailed

A MAN who tried to murder his former lover will spend at least eight years in jail.

Ian Deer (pictured right), 24, of Blenheim Drive, Hawkinge, was sentenced at Canterbury Crown Court after pleading guilty to attempted murder.

He tried to kill his 19-year-old ex-partner during a "determined and vicious" attack in Blenheim Drive on June 26, last year.

He was deemed a dangerous offender by Judge Adele Williams who imposed an indeterminate sentence – meaning he can only be considered for parole after eight years.

Det Insp Trevor Fleming said: "This was a determined and vicious attack. The victim showed great courage and was in court to see sentence passed. This brave young woman is now rebuilding her life and I wish her well."



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rapper Vanilla Ice is panto star



IT'S A RAP: Vanilla Ice on stage

Ice will now play the pirate villain Captain Hook when Peter Pan begins its run in Chatham on Friday, December 9. The show will perform until Monday, January 2.

Ironically, his first album was called Hooked.

Tony Hill, the general manager at the Central Theatre, said: "Over the past few years we have had some

great names at our pantomimes.

"It is fantastic news that we have booked internationally famous star Vanilla Ice for this year's pantomime Peter Pan."

"Ice is a huge name who I am sure will be a really big draw for parents and children alike, because of his musical and film career as well as his appearance on Dancing on Ice."

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Mentally ill die 25 years early

By **CHRIS MURPHY**

editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

LIFE expectancy among severely mentally ill patients in Kent is being dramatically reduced by up to 25 years due to poor physical health, according to a new study.

A head of nursing at a major health trust has admitted they had simply "forgotten" about physical well-being.

Researchers at the University of East Anglia chose the Kent and Medway National Health Service (NHS) and Social Care Partnership Trust, to carry out the study because it is a typical secondary mental health service provider to a population of 1.6 million in the South East of England.

The team said physical ill-health is already commonplace among severely mentally ill people across Britain.

Snapshot

So over two years, they chose to closely examine the cases of almost 800 Kent patients with severe mental illness such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorder in order to gain a snapshot of just how bad the situation really is, and, more importantly, what could be done about it.

In a frightening statistic, they discovered two-thirds were overweight or obese, and a disproportionate number suffered from diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure and raised cholesterol.

The research team found inactivity, poor diet, smoking and excessive alcohol consumption were the norm, plus obesity was prevalent at 66 per cent.

It was also discovered 34 per cent of patients

Physical health 'forgotten', admits nursing boss



RESEARCH: Professor Richard Gray, right, believes more attention ought to be paid to the physical health of the mentally ill, many of whom are overweight and heavy smokers

had high blood pressure; 52 per cent had abnormally high cholesterol levels and a surprisingly high proportion were being prescribed atypical antipsychotic drugs associated with weight gain.

This all contributed to a life expectancy slashed by an astonishing 25 years, mainly from cardiovascular disease.

The team said that while clinicians are well practised at assessing the risk of self-harm, they simply fail to assess the risk of cardiovascular disease.

Lead author Prof Richard Gray, of UEA's School of Nursing and Midwifery, said:



"Mental health nurses do a tough job and are compassionate and highly committed.

"But they do not tend to be skilled at managing the physical health of their patients and they often don't lead healthy lifestyles themselves.

"Since mental health workers tend to have sustained one-to-one relationships with their patients, those who smoke, have a poor diet and fail to take exercise are having a negative influence on the lives of vulnerable people.

"We need to train our mental health workers to lead by example and intervene if their patients' physical health is deteriorating."

Prof Gray has found that mental health

workers tend to smoke more than the general population and nurses, making them less than effective role models.

Prof Gray added: "Health professionals have a duty to promote health in their patients.

"Government guidelines must reflect the shared responsibility of all health care professionals to promote health in one of the most marginalised groups in our society."

An initiative that could possibly dramatically improve the figures, a Wellbeing Support Programme was launched and more than 200 mental health nurses were trained in its use.

Monitoring

The results were encouraging, with 212 mental health practitioners trained and 782 patients enrolled, and in many cases their BMI was "significantly altered".

The report said: "The need to intervene to enhance the physical health of people with severe mental illness is beyond doubt.

"Maintaining patient engagement in a physical health improvement programme is challenging. Regular comprehensive physical health monitoring is necessary to establish the benefit of intervention and increase life expectancy and well-being in this population."

Donna Eldridge, head of nursing at the Kent and Medway National Health Service (NHS) and Social Care Partnership Trust, who took part in the study, admitted there had been problems, but they are working to improve.

She said: "The reason is the drugs we used to give them, and the fact that for some reason or another, therapy and everything else in mental health came to the forefront and we forgot about physical health."

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Festival to sweep through town

TENS of thousands of people are expected to take to the streets for this year's Sweeps Festival, *writes Mathew Beech*.

The 400-year-old Medway tradition recreates the celebrations enjoyed by chimney sweeps on their traditional holiday, and the festival is now into its 31st year.

More than 50,000 people are expected to attend the three-day event in Rochester, from Saturday, April 30, to Monday, May 2, which was revived in 1981 by businessman Gordon Newton and is now the largest May Day celebration of its kind in the country.

Two of Britain's top folk acts will jointly headline the festival, with award-winning Eliza Carthy and Show of Hands sharing top billing.

Eliza Carthy and Band will be on stage in the Rochester Gardens Marquee at 7.30pm on Saturday, April 30. Show of Hands will appear at 7.30pm on Sunday, May 1.

New for this year will be the Boley Hill Village, a specially created folk performance area with theme stalls and refreshments, family street entertainment, craft workshops, and also a mini psychic fair in the Castle Gardens.

The celebrations include the traditional Jack-in-the-Green awakening ceremony, at Blue Bell Hill picnic area, Chatham, just after 5.30am on Sunday, May 1, and a procession through Rochester including Morris sides and chimney sweeps, on Monday, May 2.



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It's going to be a busy spring at Leeds Castle, and to celebrate we've teamed up with the historic landmark to offer these fantastic competitions



Picture: SCOTT WRIGHT PHOTOGRAPHY

DURING the long weekend of April 22-25, Easter will be in bloom at the castle and children will be able to take part in a gardening trail and collect letters from around the castle grounds to form a winning word.

The trail will lead to the bunny burrow near the spiralling yew maze where children completing the trail will collect a chocolate Easter egg prize.

Children's trail cards will also allow entrance into a craft marquee next to the maze where scarecrow and Easter craft activities will be on offer.

New for Easter 2011, Leeds Castle will also be giving children with a valid trail card free pumpkin seeds, pots and earth to grow them.

The Leeds Castle gardeners will be on hand to give tips and advice on how to grow enormous pumpkins as part of this year's competition, Beat the Leeds Castle Gardeners.

We have three family (two adults and three children) Spring into Easter Key to the Castle tickets to give away. To be in with a chance of winning just answer this simple question:

What seed will children with a valid trail card be given?
a) Pumpkin, b) Tomato, c) Cabbage

Text EASTER (space) answer, your name and address and send to 64343.

COME and watch one of the biggest events in history taking place on a big screen at Leeds Castle's Royal Wedding Celebration.

To commemorate the marriage of Prince William to Catherine Middleton on Friday, April 29, the event will be broadcast live on a big open air screen at Leeds Castle, perfect to watch history being made with your friends, family and those around you. Gates open early at 9.30am.

Leeds Castle is Kent's beautiful royal palace, having been home to six medieval queens during its 900 year history and a preferred residence of Henry VIII.

We have three family (two adults and three children) Royal Wedding Celebration Key to the Castle tickets to give away for the royal wedding screening. To be in with a chance of winning tell us:

How many medieval queens has Leeds Castle been home to?
A) 6, B) 8, C) 4

To enter text WEDDING (space) your answer, your name and your address and send to 64343.



AFTER the excitement of the royal wedding, Leeds Castle will be carrying the celebrations on into the evening with an open-air film screening of the musical comedy Mamma Mia! Following the film screening, there will be a magnificent fireworks display to music to conclude this memorable day.

We have three family (two adults and three children) Royal Wedding Fireworks and Open Air Cinema Evening Key to the Castle tickets to give away for just the film screening and fireworks.

To be in with a chance of winning just tell us:
What film will Leeds Castle be screening in the evening of the Royal Wedding Day?

a) Mamma Mia! b) Waterloo, c) Money Money Money
Text FIREWORKS (space) answer, your name and address and send to 64343.



If you're not one of the lucky winners, why not buy a Key to the Castle pass, which means you only have to pay once and your Key will get you admission to the castle and its grounds for a whole year, with the exception of evening ticketed events.

• Texts cost £1 plus standard network rates. Entries received after the closing date of Monday, April 11, 2011, will not be counted but you may still be charged. Your number may be used by Archant KOS Media. If you do not wish to receive information on any other products or services, please text EXIT at the end of your message.

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Street briefings a success in beating alcohol-related crime

THE police are taking a zero tolerance approach to alcohol-related crime on Friday and Saturday nights.

Medway Police station's tactical team have been running regular street briefings in Rochester for the last 18 months and they have become so popular that representatives from all of Medway's main nightspots now attend so they can be prepared for the weekend's revelries.

Staff are given the opportunity to get advance notice of any issues that may arise and identify any repeat offenders or suspects wanted for questioning in relation to outstanding police investigations.

The briefings are held in Rochester and are attended by a number of pubs and clubs from the High Street.

Representatives also attend from other Medway nightspots including Bliss in Gillingham, and the Tap 'n' Tin and Manor Club in Chatham.

Sgt Alex Bain said: "We take a zero tolerance approach to alcohol-related crime, public order offences, drug use, criminal damage and people using fake ID."

"We will always look to positively deal with offenders and they can face getting an £80 on the spot fine or being arrested."

"We are also able to issue people with notices banning them from a certain area for a period of time, usually up to 24 hours."

"We have thousands of visitors to the towns every weekend and the message is that everyone is welcome as long as they behave in an acceptable manner."

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Q: What about men?

A: Backs and chest.

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Veteran trees need your help

By **CHRIS MURPHY**

editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

A GROUP looking after the county's heritage trees is calling for volunteers to check on our ancient woodlands and ensure they are in good health.

The British Trust for Conservation Volunteers was last year awarded a £652,400 Heritage Lottery Fund grant. Now it is using the cash to run a five-year scheme to encourage the involvement of hundreds of people of all ages to look after Kent's rich stock of heritage trees. These are defined by the Forestry Commission as "old trees, wide trees, rare trees and trees with historical and cultural significance".

The Ashford branch of the organisation, which was launched in 1959, wants volunteers to become tree surveyors, take part in educational sessions, plant new trees, or learn more on free courses.

A spokesman said: "Just a few hours of your time could help to conserve these magnificent trees."

"BTCV is looking for 330 volunteers to register and train to become heritage tree surveyors – no experience is necessary as BTCV will provide all registered volunteers with free training and equipment."

It is holding three open days: on May 14 in Ashford, June 14 at Canterbury, and July 10 in Tonbridge, to give people the chance to hear more.

Project officer Virginia Hodge said: "We will be running these events to get people involved with tree recording and raising the profile of heritage trees."

"The event will include guided walks and talks, visits to heritage tree parks, community awareness open days, biodiversity and heritage tree ecology courses and heritage tree walks."

She said the sessions will provide an introduction to practical conservation and the natural world with fun activities including natural art and music, tree decorating and mini-beast hunts.

She added: "Heritage trees are an amazing and integral part of our natural heritage. They are the old trees in woodland, parkland and the gnarled oaks in the hedgerows. Kent has 10 per cent of England's irreplaceable ancient woodland. We want to identify and record the oldest examples and save and protect them for future generations."

Kate MacKenzie, BTCV operations director, added: "South East England has the highest proportion of heritage trees in Western Europe, offering biodiversity, providing habitats and food for a range of creatures and representing hundreds of years of Kentish culture, yet we know little about them. Now we will be able to properly identify, protect and manage these important natural assets."

• **Call Virginia Hodge on 01233 666519 or email v.hodge@btcv.org.uk for more information.**



HELP: No experience is necessary to volunteer



BEAUTIES: From left: crowned crane and parrots are among the many birds to be seen at the castle

Make a date with nature at the castle

THE RSPB needs help from people across the county for a wildlife project at Leeds Castle.

From next Saturday, April 9, until Monday, May 2, and again from August 13-September 4, the group is running its Date With Nature event at the castle near Maidstone.

It wants to encourage visitors to find out more about the wide range of birds and other wildlife that can be seen in the grounds and to help them get a close up view.

Birds likely to be seen include three types of swans, the black, whooper and mute, plus geese, ducks, herons, buzzards, sparrowhawks, kingfishers and even water voles.

James McComiskey, of the RSPB South East said: "If you're enthusiastic about

wildlife and like talking to people, you're bound to enjoy this project.

"You'll be given training, so you don't need to have expert knowledge on wildlife to volunteer with us."

The charity needs people of all ages and backgrounds and the volunteers will distribute information to visitors and assist people with viewing the wildlife from the castle grounds using an array of optical equipment including binoculars and spotting scopes.

Anyone interested in volunteering can contact James McComiskey on 07889615725 or email james.mccomiskey@rspb.org.uk as soon as possible to arrange training and volunteer schedules.

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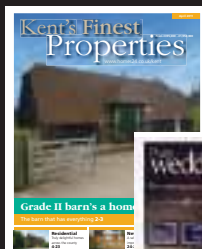
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Charities lose out to clothing thieves

By **MARIJKE COX**

marijke.cox@kosmedia.co.uk

BOGUS charity collectors operating in Kent have caused a staggering drop in the number of donations from members of the public.

In just one month, children's charities Make a Wish and NSPCC have seen Clothes Aid donations drop significantly, with the biggest decreases seen in Medway, by 20 per cent, and Canterbury, by 42 per cent.

Karen England, head of fundraising at Make a Wish, which grants wishes to children suffering life-threatening illnesses, blames the decrease on the rising number of bogus collections, fake charity bags and clothing collection thefts.

"The money raised from clothing collections run for us by Clothes Aid is invaluable and donated clothes have generated over £620,000 nationally so far," she said.

"This year Clothes Aid aims to raise £150,000 for Make-A-Wish to help us grant more magical wishes to just some of the 20,000 children and young people living in the UK with a life-threatening illness.

"We absolutely depend on the public to donate their unwanted clothes.

"That's why we're calling on our supporters to keep on giving with care"

Conmen

Chatham and Aylesford Tory MP Tracey Crouch launched a campaign last year to stop bogus charity collectors operating in Kent and Medway.

It followed a BBC investigation which revealed Lithuanian conmen claiming to work for Breakthrough Breast Cancer had been delivering clothes sacks in north Kent.

The donated articles were then being sold on abroad.

According to Miss Crouch, an estimated 36,000 tonnes of clothes are stolen every year, at a cost to charities of up to £14 million in donations.

However, she said enforcement action against bogus charity collectors is poor and that only one in every 10,000 acts of illegal collection is actually punished.

"Unless the issue is taken seriously right from the top, the scam will continue," she said.

Tory charities minister Nick Hurd vowed to address the problem by writing to both the Association of Chief Police Officers and the Ministry of Justice to review guidance

for officers and levels of punishment.

Make a Wish fundraising head Ms England issued advice to householders who wished to continue donating clothes to charity.

"Look out for the Clothes Aid collection bag on your doorstep between now and April 18 and check your clothing is picked up by a uniformed collector in a Clothes Aid van.

"Look for a Give with Confidence tick of approval from the Fundraising Standards Board on leaflets and bags."

If you suspect a bogus collector or a theft you can call the collection protection helpline on 020 7288 8535.



Mental health help all day

KENT and Medway will soon be among a handful of places in England to offer people free 24-hour confidential, emotional support.

From April 1, support from the Mental Health Matters will be available round the clock in Kent and Medway on 0800 107 0160.

Previously the helpline was open in the evenings and at weekends, but was closed in the daytime during the week.

"Last year, the Mental Health Matters helpline in Kent and Medway received more than 10,000 calls," said Lauretta Kavanagh, director of mental health commissioning for the Kent and Medway primary care trusts.

"People called about relationship problems, loneliness, stress, and bereavement."

People can also live chat with a counsellor at timeonline@mentalhealthmatters.co.uk.

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Not too late for broadband bids

THERE is still time for Kent's rural communities to bid for grants to speed up broadband, says Cllr Kevin Lynes, of Kent County Council.

He said: "We recently launched the £1.5 million Superfast Broadband Pilot Fund to help rural communities benefit from high-speed broadband. The closing date for this is April 14.

"For those who are not successful first time round, we will have further KCC funds available in the summer and autumn to enable a total of 15 areas to benefit."

Communities in Kent can also bid for the separate KCC-administered community broadband grant.

Community groups can apply for grants on the www.kent.gov.uk/broadband website or an application form can be obtained from the KCC contact centre on 08458 247247.

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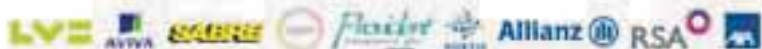
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Higher water demand 'poses risk to river life'

By **MATHEW BEECH**

matthew.beech@kosmedia.co.uk

THE river ecosystem and wildlife is under threat from an increase in households' demands for water, according to campaigners.

The Our Rivers campaign, backed by the WWF and the RSPB, is calling on the Government to take action on the rivers in England and Wales that are threatened.

The Kentish River Stour, which starts near Ashford, runs through Canterbury and flows into the English Channel at Pegwell Bay, is one of the UK's rivers they say is seriously threatened by the increase in demand for water, due to new developments.

This is expected to worsen as demand for water grows under development pressure in areas such as Ashford.

Due to their clear waters and relatively stable temperature and flow regimes, chalk rivers provide a unique habitat that is important for species such as white-clawed crayfish, otter, brown trout and the UK's fastest declining mammal, the water vole.

Steve Gilbert, of the RSPB South East, said: "The Our Rivers campaign is calling on the Government to act quickly on the results of its own research and tackle the issue.

"It has already identified 148 cases where over-abstraction is damaging rivers and the wildlife they support, but there has been no action to reduce the amount of water taken."

The Wild Trout Trust is also backing the campaign, because the trout populations in the Stour are threatened with extinction if their habitats are not protected.



THREAT: The increasingly rare water vole

The Trust's conservation officer, Andy Thomas, said: "There are several implications if over-abstraction does occur in rivers such as the Stour.

"Low flow affects trout migration, meaning they are more prone to being eaten by predators and they more likely to be stressed and diseased. Then there is climate change. Water temperature can increase due to the reduced surface area of the river, which will dramatically affect the ecosystem."

South East Water, which controls water and waste management throughout most of Kent, is keen to protect water resources.

A spokesman said: "We don't extract from the Stour and we are very environmentally minded. Each day, South East Water takes more than 565 million litres of water from the environment and supplies it to about 2.1m customers.

"This water is taken principally from underground aquifers, but also from rivers and surface reservoirs, within strict limits set by the Environment Agency."



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MEDWAY: South dock pumping station

Picture: CLEM RUTTER

Protecting the relics of our industrial past

By **STEVE KNIGHT**

steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

ENGLISH Heritage is undertaking a survey of historic industrial sites in Kent to see which are at risk of crumbling into a state of disrepair.

The former naval dockyards of Chatham and Sheerness are expected to be closely examined as part of the project, as are Oare Gunpowder Works near Faversham and various hop farms throughout the county.

English Heritage will publish its findings in October as part of its annual Heritage at Risk register, which provides an insight into the condition of the UK's listed buildings, scheduled monuments, protected wrecks and more.

South East planning director Dr Andy Brown said: "It's sometimes said that the South East does not have much of an industrial heritage."

"While it is true we don't have the huge textile mills, warehouses and potteries that characterise parts of the north, we do have innumerable remains in town and country of the Industrial Revolution – that great era spanning from 1750 to World War One when Britain led the world."

Either side of publication of the Heritage at Risk register, English Heritage will be engaging with politicians, academics, owners, developers and more to discuss how best to deal with the problem of decaying buildings.

Dr Brown said the current economic climate was not helping.

He added: "Owners are finding it hard to look after the needs of their buildings as well as their businesses. Developers are cautious about taking on vacant industrial



INSPECTION: The No. 7 covered slip at Chatham Historic Dockyard

Picture: CLEM RUTTER

buildings, and public bodies and regeneration agencies are less able to support schemes for re-use.

"There are no easy answers, but we're determined to see what can be done to help. Our industrial past is too important to ignore."

English Heritage is now inviting members of the public to post photographs and comments about their favourite industrial buildings at www.english-heritage.org.uk, which hosts a Flickr group run in association with the Council for British Archaeology, and the Association for Industrial Archaeology.

Last year's Heritage at Risk register revealed that 101 castles, monuments and other listed buildings in Kent face the very real possibility of falling apart due to a lack of investment.

But it was not all bad news for the county, as two previously at-risk structures – the Montreal Park Obelisk in Sevenoaks and the barn at Westenhanger Castle near Hythe – were removed from the register.

Also included was a sample survey of the 2,254 places of worship in the South East, which concluded that about 86 per cent were in either good or fair condition.



GROWTH INDUSTRY: Kent's historic hop farms will be surveyed by English Heritage

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Picture: MARK RAMSAY



ANGER: Feelings were running high at the protest over Government cuts that will affect public sector services

Cuts too deep and too rapid, warns bishop

People 'need time to adjust to being self-supporting'

MASSIVE Government spending cuts will hamper the public's ability to regain responsibility from the state, warns the Bishop of Rochester.

While acknowledging the need to reduce the deficit, the Right Rev James Langstaff – who also represents Bexley, Bromley, Gravesham, Dartford

By **STEVE KNIGHT**

steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

and most of west Kent – says the speed and depth of the cuts may not give people time to adjust.

The bishop's comments come as more than 250,000 people took part in an anti-cuts demonstration in London, resulting in 201 arrests as a minority of protestors broke windows and covered businesses in paint.

"I think it's fairly clear that over the last generation we have – perhaps without noticing it – allowed the state to play a bigger and bigger part in people's lives, and that's partly our own fault," he said.

"When something goes wrong our response is 'what's the Government going to do about it?', and that has a price tag to it.

"So there needs to be more than just spending cuts; there needs to be a change in people's mentality so we learn again to take more responsibility for ourselves. But there's a slight danger that the learning process might be undermined by the depth and rapidity of the cuts."

Councils currently have little option but to make huge savings over the next financial year due to the front-loading of cuts imposed by the Coalition.

Kent County Council, for example, must save £95 million this year followed by a lower figure of £65m in 2012-13.

Last month the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, told KoS Government spending cuts were putting vulnerable people at risk.

He added that he wished councils had the option to show more forward planning when it came to service reductions, and that he was worried some people would continue to be worse off, even after the economy has recovered.

The Rt Rev Langstaff, who is three months into his new job, agreed with Dr Williams that homelessness could also rise as a result of the spending cuts.

He said: "There's an argument for that. Even in wealthier parts of Kent there will be partners on good jobs who may be made



CHANGE NEEDED: The Bishop of Rochester the Rt Rev James Langstaff, urges caution

redundant at the same time, and then even they will start to wonder where the next meal is going to come from.

"Of course the cuts will also cause a great deal of anxiety in areas that are heavily dependent on employment in the public sector or on state support for different things, and there's a big question mark over how we respond to that.

"But the Church will play its part in meeting human need, as it has done for more than 2,000 years – long before anyone invented the Big Society."

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Pray for those in action in Libya

THE Bishop of Rochester has voiced his support for the ongoing military action against Colonel Gaddafi's Libyan regime.

While admitting Christians have difficulty supporting any kind of conflict, the Right Reverend James Langstaff indicated that coalition forces probably had to intervene for the greater good.

However, he warned against British forces getting caught up in yet another lengthy war, following the huge loss of life in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Rt Rev Langstaff said: "There is a question as to what right we have to intervene when another person is perceived to be oppressive and violent towards his own people. It was the same with Hitler during World War Two.

"Christians have different views about using force, but I think in the case of Libya we probably had to,

on balance.

"These things are never entirely clear. They're not clearly right or clearly wrong, and you often have to weigh up what to do.

"We don't know what carnage might have taken place if Col Gaddafi's forces had reached Benghazi. That's why we have to pray for the people whose job it is to make these extremely difficult judgements."

The Rt Rev Langstaff added that it was important the coalition forces do not outstay their welcome in Libya, and risk being perceived as "western colonialists".

He said: "My anxiety is that once you get involved in this type of thing, it can be very difficult to get out of.

"I really hope that those people who make these decisions work out how not to get embroiled."



SUPPORT: Allied air strikes were necessary in Libya, to prevent carnage, says the Bishop



HUMAN ERROR: The Japanese earthquake devastation is a result of building in the wrong place, says the Bishop of Rochester

Natural disasters 'are a side-effect of creation'

CHRISTIANS should not lose faith in God over tragedies such as the devastating earthquake and tsunami in Japan, says the Bishop of Rochester.

The 9.0-magnitude quake and the powerful tidal wave it triggered off the north-east coast on March 11 is now known to have killed more than 10,900 people, with more than 17,000 still missing.

But while admitting it was understandable for people to question the existence of God following such catastrophic events, the Right Reverend James Langstaff said mankind had to take responsibility for what had happened.

"Tragedies like the earthquake shake people's confidence," he

added. "They ask how they can believe in a loving God when such terrible things are allowed to happen, when the reality is that they arise out of the fabric of the world we live in.

"Creation has these side consequences. While one is very sympathetic about the situation in Japan, one has to consider where we choose to place our cities, because we can't expect God to do everything.

"We have it in our power to sort these problems out ourselves. Tokyo is very close to a major fault line, so what are we doing to exercise our God-given responsibilities to avoid these kinds of disasters? "Earthquakes are unfortunately going to happen. That's how the world was made."

Artistic initiative

THE University of Kent has announced new developments at its Medway campus.

The university is investing more than £5 million in its Arts at Medway initiative, to provide fine art, music and audio, and event and experience design students with a better study environment.

Vice-chancellor Prof Julia Goodfellow said the investment showed that Kent placed high value on arts and humanities courses.

"The arts play an important role and are popular with students. Our investment at Medway sends a clear signal that the University of Kent values its work in this area," she said.

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Pioneering op could save sight of elderly

By **JENNA PUDELEK**

jenna.pudelek@kosmedia.co.uk

SURGEONS are trying out a new technique to treat a common cause of blindness in elderly people.

The trial is being carried out by specialists at Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust (MTW) using a new epimacular (a thin layer of tissue in the region of the eye responsible for acute vision) radiotherapy technique.

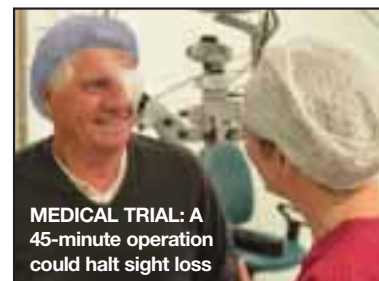
Over the next three years up to 40 patients will be treated at Maidstone, which is part of a national network of 18 hospitals involved in the research.

Wet age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is one of the most common causes of sight-loss in older people, and Donald Ross, who lives in Paddock Wood, is among the 250,000 people in the UK affected by the condition.

The 75-year-old took part in the trial this week. Mr Ross is a professional tennis coach who continues to teach part-time.

AMD can lead to blindness within months if left untreated. The seven to eight injections a year needed to treat the condition costs the NHS up to £7,000. In comparison, the surgical procedure being trialled at Maidstone costs about £6,000 and could pay for itself within a year or two.

Mr Ross has had numerous injections in his eyes over the past four years to stop the progress of macular degeneration.



MEDICAL TRIAL: A 45-minute operation could halt sight loss

He had the 45-minute radiotherapy technique operation under local anaesthetic. The day after, his vision was good.

He said: "I volunteered to be part of this trial because I am optimistic that this procedure may mean that I will need to have much fewer, and perhaps no further injections."

"That is obviously a major benefit to many people, and it should save the NHS money, too."

"The ophthalmic team at Maidstone Hospital are great. My sight is precious to me, and they have saved it."

The trial is being carried out under the licence of Dr Stewart Coltart, a consultant oncologist.

People interested in participating in the study should visit the study website, www.merlotstudy.com to find out more, and to see if they might be eligible.

If eligible, people from Kent should request a referral from their GP or eye doctor to Mr Luke Membrey at MTW.

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Kent group joins protest against cuts

PROTESTORS from across Kent were among a crowd of up to 500,000 who marched through London to demonstrate their anger at Government spending cuts, **writes Steve Knight.**

The mass rally was organised by the Trades Union Congress (TUC) and promoted at a county level by a collaboration of 10 of the UK's biggest trade unions known collectively as Kent - Save Our Services.

Chairwoman Zoe Van Dyke, of the public service union Unison, told KoS she was delighted with the turnout at last Saturday's march, despite the actions of a minority of protestors who vandalised businesses.

She said: "It was very uplifting and good to see that people felt the issue was important enough to make the effort."

"The march was the first step in the process of making it clear to the Government that the majority of people disagree with the cuts."

The TUC said 250,000-500,000 people attended the march from Embankment to Hyde Park, which passed off without incident.

But trouble erupted after a separate group, wearing scarves to mask their faces, attacked stores at Oxford Street before heading to Piccadilly and Trafalgar Square.

"I don't think the violence was justified



PEACEFUL: Members of Medway Green Party joined the London demonstration

and it didn't do our cause a great deal of good," said Ms Van Dyke.

"You have to wonder if the people involved were actually interested in what we were marching for, but I don't think their actions detracted from it, because on the whole the demonstration was very peaceful."

"We should be concentrating on the volume of people who attended and what it says about public feeling. We didn't vote for this decimation of public services."

The disturbances at the march formed the basis of a debate in the House of Commons on Monday, when Canterbury Tory MP Julian Brazier accused those who took part in even the peaceful aspects of the demonstration of "foolishness".

He also criticised Labour leader Ed Miliband for his speech to the protestors, in he claimed the march came "in the tradition" of the suffragettes, the US civil rights movement and the anti-apartheid campaign.

Mr Brazier said: "In rightly condemning the extreme behaviour of a few hundred people we are in danger of losing sight of the essential foolishness of the perfectly legitimate, but misguided, demonstration."

Meanwhile, North Thanet MP Roger Gale has lodged a formal complaint with the BBC over its coverage of the march.

The senior Tory backbencher claims the broadcaster has become "partial to an unacceptable degree" after first referring to the Coalition as "the Tory Government" before airing an interview with Treasury minister Justine Greening, whose comments were "distracted" by live images of the protests.

A MAN is facing criminal charges after allegedly faking his own death.

Anthony Brendan McErlean, 66, of Swarling Hill Road, Petham, Canterbury, has been charged with fraud.

It is claimed that between December 5, 2009, and May 31, 2010, he made a false claim to

an insurance company to claim death benefit of £520,000 by faking his own death in Honduras.

He appeared at Canterbury Magistrates Court on Wednesday and has been remanded in custody until April 6 when he will again appear at Canterbury Magistrates Court.

FIREFIGHTERS tackled a blaze aboard a ship ironically named the Ocean Dragon.

Six fire engines were sent to Ramsgate Harbour at about 11.15pm on Tuesday, following reports of a fire that broke out in the vessel's engine room.

About 30 crew members from the Ramsgate, Thanet and

Margate crews helped tackled the blaze, while a height vehicle, command support unit and water unit were also at the scene.

Ramsgate watch manager David Halls said: "The incident was quite challenging as crews had to work in a confined space."

Firefighters tackled the blaze using a hose reel and main jet.

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Greens and driving association approach roads debate from opposite directions

Motorway speed limit review fuels safety and pollution fears

By **MARIJKE COX**

marijke.cox@kosmedia.co.uk

GREEN campaigners have vowed to push for reduced motorway speed limits despite transport chiefs in Parliament considering a possible rise by the summer.

MPs could be asked to vote as soon as July on plans to raise the limit from 70 to 80mph as part of a new road safety strategy, due to be considered in May.

Transport minister Mike Penning said they will look at the economic benefits of shorter journey times and the road safety implications.

Supporters of the proposed increase said when the 70mph limit was introduced in 1964 cars were not capable of reaching higher speeds. They argue that with advances in technology, vehicles are now designed to travel safely at faster speeds.

But Kent Green Party said there was ample evidence that safety decreased and emissions increased with higher speeds.

Member Steve Dawe said: "If we lower motorway speeds and speeds in residential areas, we can cut both emissions and accidents. Kent Green Party supports a review of motorway speeds with a view to reducing lim-



its and has long campaigned for 20mph limits for all residential roads in urban areas."

An experimental 70mph limit was put in

place almost 50 years ago after a spate of unofficial road races and accidents on what was then unrestricted road.

The new limit could be put in place on motorways across the country, although plans are to keep a 70mph limit on the M25.

Statistics show British motorways are among the safest roads in Europe. In 2009 there were 2,222 road deaths, with 132 of those on motorways.

Kent Green Party has also repeated calls for 20mph limits in residential areas, prompted by a rise in the number of child casualties on the roads.

Chairman Stuart Jeffrey said: "This problem has gone on far too long. It's time for action. Kent needs an immediate change to 20mph limits in all residential areas. As we know, residents overwhelmingly support this, the last government supported this and public health experts support this.

"There is no excuse not to implement it." Campaign group the Association of British Drivers (ABD) has been pushing

REVIEW: The speed limit is under scrutiny and could be raised to 80mph on most UK motorways, but campaigners want reductions

for an increase in the motorway speed limit for years.

Kent spokesman Ian Taylor said an increase would be a victory for drivers.

"Motorways are the fastest and yet safest roads. Most people drive on motorways and a lot of them drive at 80mph anyway," he said.

"Driving at this speed is what most modern cars are built for."

A spokesman for the Highways Agency, which forms part of the Department for Transport, said the plans formed part of a new road safety strategy which will be considered next month.

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Making a stand against burglars

POLICE in Maidstone have recovered stolen property worth almost £80,000 in the first few days of a campaign against burglars.

Heavy machinery which had been stolen from the Medway City Estate on March 20 was recovered while a search warrant was carried out at a property in Otham. Det Sgt Martin Foord said no arrests had been made but investigations were continuing.

Stay Safe This Spring is Kent Police's seasonal drive to reduce crime associated with lighter evenings and mild weather. It runs until April 8 and aims to raise awareness of how opportunist crimes can be prevented.

Officers are targeting those suspected of burglary, theft and handling stolen goods, and outlets used for passing on property.

Home security advice includes locking front doors and windows if you are in the back garden; don't leave valuables visible through a window; and consider extra security such as spy holes and alarms.

• See www.kent.police.uk/spring for more advice.

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LETTERS

LETTER OF THE WEEK

You can bank on more anger

As one of the huge number of people who attended the TUC's March for the Alternative, which included many from across Kent, I can say that despite the small amount of so-called violence against certain establishments, the majority peacefully paraded their total opposition to the Con-Dem Coalition Government's plans.

However, if some people are worried about the Ritz being cracked, or a few bejewelled Hyacinth Bucket types being upset by the moralising chanting of UK Uncut's flashmob-style invasion of Fortnum & Mason and the breaking of banks' windows, maybe they should actually be asking themselves why people felt so angry in the first place.

The reasons for the anger are the same as why up to half a million people were peacefully parading through the streets of London in the first place. They were all against the unnecessary cuts, job losses and complete privatisation of the public sector being carried out by the Government.

I watched people from across the UK pass with banners from not just the unions and political parties, but from many youth, health, care and elderly centres, council departments, NHS nurses and doctors, social services, disability groups, and even off-duty police officers, among many others.

As TUC chief Brendan Barber said before Saturday, it's not just the unions but a very broad coalition of ordinary people and groups.

Here was also the anger Bank of England Governor Mervyn King mentioned recently – wondering why there seemed so little of it. Even he has intimated that cuts to the state sector – affecting the most vulnerable – because of the mistakes of the financial sector, are largely unjustified.

All those in London last Saturday were clear that there is most definitely an alternative – that the Green New Deal, Robin Hood Tax, closing tax loopholes and maintaining the NHS and welfare state is a far better way to a decent society than the money-mad Con-Dems can ever imagine. Well done to everyone who was there and all those who watched in support from home.

Ray Duff, Folkestone

Dunkirk spirit alive and well

So Mrs Russell from Ramsgate thinks the British wouldn't behave like the Japanese in an emergency (Letters, last week).

Has she forgotten so soon the incredible tales of bravery during the 7/7 bombings in London, when heroic people saved many lives at great risk to themselves?

What about during the flooding in Cumbria, when neighbours helped each other? What about when there were IRA bombs going off and people rushed to help their fellow men and women? During the Boxing Day tsunami many British holidaymakers and those living in

OPINION: A NUCLEAR NIPPON AGAIN

TIM GARBUTT asks if the crisis in Japan offers lessons closer to home and whether the nuclear industry's toxic tide has finally reached its high point

IT'S ALMOST impossible to describe the events in Japan. A house on fire and floating down-river. A cargo ship flung into the centre of town. And whole towns simply washed away.

And if the effects of the tsunami and earthquake – the worst in Japan's history – are receding, then the explosions at the Fukushima nuclear power complex pose more problems. These apocalyptic events also contain the seeds of danger in Kent. The Boxing Day tsunami in 2004 left more than 250,000 dead around the Indian Ocean; the broken flood defences in New Orleans from 2005's Hurricane Katrina; and the destruction of Port-au-Prince in Haiti last year were equally appalling and are now part of our Age of Climate Change.

Earthquakes, tsunamis and floods are nothing new, but warmer summers and colder winters mean more frequent and violent weather events. In Kent, we now have to wonder about the safety of nuclear reactors at Dungeness and even Sizewell – built on the shoreline and still without a no-fly zone, as required at Fukushima.

Or even the dangers of the USS Richard Montgomery, sunk off Sheerness in 1944 with 3,000 tonnes of explosives on board. An explosion could unleash a five-metre-high tsunami in Kent.

And with France one of the few major nuclear powers outside the United States and Japan, the dangers of the 2009 failures at Gravelines, just over the Channel, and dumping nuclear waste off Brittany seems ludicrous in the 21st century.

Especially as Fukushima now requires food and drink to be screened for radiation before export from Japan – a concern for Kent's farmers facing problems here. Nuclear power is still expanding in China with five reactors due to be built each year, but as an energy source it must now have reached its high tide. All the more poignant given the 25th anniversary of Chernobyl this month and the horror of a third nuclear disaster on Japan.

Nuclear's toxic dangers are too high and

reliance on fossil fuels such as uranium an anachronism, compared with the relatively low production cost and perpetual, clean and free energy from renewables such as solar, wave and wind. Kent's windfarms in the London Array or Vattenfall sites will certainly be out-produced by solar and projects such as Desertec in the years ahead, where all the world's electricity can be generated by just six hours of sunshine in Saharan solar farms.

If Freedom of Information and Environmental Information Regulations provide the right to information on public organisations, utilities and the environment, then surely public safety issues for toxins, flood defences, air and water pollution, asbestos, etc, must routinely be published and scrutinised.

Still in 2011, six years after the FoI Act became law (and EIR some 20 years earlier across the EU) Kent's politicians and civil servants are dragging their heels on basic issues such as costs and diaries.

Fukushima and the two earthquakes in New Zealand in the last year highlight how search and rescue teams can still be at base four days after an emergency response.

Surely the time is right for permanent UN humanitarian depots across the Pacific and Caribbean for a response within 12 hours of any crisis. Decommissioned aircraft carriers could be available for the hurricane season with food, water, tents and medicine. It seems astonishing there is no single global emergency response number – similar to 999 in the UK or 112 in the EU – as well as a single web and text helpline.

In Kent, we seem able to fund 76 lawyers on the rates at the county council or £20 million of investments in Japan Tobacco, yet struggle with a dedicated air ambulance and even a single non-emergency number to lead the way across the world in the hour of need.

At the very least, when the flood defences fail and the reactors explode, you might get through to the right call centre in Kent rather than put on hold.

• **Tim Garbutt is managing director of the Sincerity Agency, based in east Kent. He is standing as an Independent Green mayor for Ramsgate.**



affected areas helped people escape and cope with the aftermath.

There are many instances of ordinary people doing extraordinary things in times of emergency in recent times.

It's a great pity Mrs Russell thinks so little of her fellow Britons to assume there would be looting or indifference in a disaster.

Has she forgotten what we call the Dunkirk spirit, when we all rally round to help those less fortunate?

Howard Johnston, by email

Water power is neglected

We have a large wind farm operating off the Thanet coast. Islay has now installed a tidal turbine that will fulfil all the energy requirements of the island, including running eight distilleries.

It would be interesting to compare the efficiency and output of both. Wind is intermittent; tides are constant, as is the flow of water in

rivers. Why, then, has so much Government energy and money been ploughed into the less-reliable wind turbines?

There are other advantages to water turbines. Because they are underwater, there is no visual or sonic impact.

They could pass the electricity directly into the mains in the same way domestic energy producers are supposed to do.

The wind farms are, I believe, built by foreign companies, and the cost of installation is formidable. The ease and cost of installing water turbines would be far less. Moreover, there are several British companies already producing them.

There must be hundreds of rivers and streams in this country with sufficient flow of water to drive them – if a stream can power a watermill, it can drive a turbine. There are loads of ex-watermills on the most unpromising little rivers.

With some Government investment, this could become a thriving industry, and would surely find favour with environmentalists.

Or is there some insurmountable drawback to water power?

Dave Stewart, Deal

Railing against travel expense

As more and more people unfortunately find themselves unemployed and their savings being diminished, getting back to work can be seriously hampered by increased travel costs.

There are astronomically high rail fares, rapidly increasing fuel prices and an expensive and woefully inadequate bus service.

Most people will find they are going to travel a long way if they want work. This will probably involve commuting to London if they are lucky, or further afield.

The cost of a monthly season ticket by rail is up to £475. How many unemployed people can afford that?

And they will not get any help from the Job Centre unless they have been out of work for at least six months.

Sittingbourne and Sheppey MP Gordon Henderson has



Just how thin the blue line really is

A COMMON complaint among victims of crime is that there are no longer enough bobbies on the beat to deter offenders.

But even the most supportive of residents will be shocked to hear that fewer than 10 per cent of Kent Police officers are out patrolling at any one time.

Even figures for areas with higher numbers of frontline police have shockingly low numbers, with Merseyside – the place with the largest count – having only 17 per cent of its force out on patrol.

People understand there are spending cuts and forces have to look carefully at how things are run, but having just 10 per cent on the beat will come as a nasty surprise to most. And what kind of message does it send to criminals? They must be rubbing their hands.

If there is more visible policing on the streets, the public are likely to feel reassured and perhaps those planning to break the law will think twice. Even problems such as anti-social behaviour, which can blight communities, can be stemmed if there is a local beat officer deterring troublemakers.

The Chief Constable defended the figure, saying although visibility was important there were other elements of crime fighting which could not be done openly, and that work of other uniformed officers had not been taken into account.

Although this work is appreciated by the community, it does not stop anti-social behaviour and other problems faced by residents which could be sorted out swiftly by an officer pounding the pavement.

Treat your mother to a perfect day

THIS Sunday, treat your mum by sitting her down, pouring her a glass of wine and letting her put her feet up without interruption.

While for many this is a typical Sunday afternoon, for most mothers it's a faded memory of days gone by.

So this Mother's Day treat your mum to some long-awaited rest and relaxation.

raised this in Parliament.

Before taking a job, the prospective employee has to consider the expense of getting to work and other costs.

If this person pays rent, and council tax – paid for while out of work – these costs have to first to be subtracted from pay, then it is likely this person will then be liable to pay tax.

The monthly figures could be: rent £500; council tax £100; rail fares £475; making a total £1,075. This means the employee has to earn £1,210 a month before they can eat or heat their property. That equates to £14,500 a year.

How many jobs in London pay significantly more than that, for people who have been out of work?

Nationalisation of the railways, as per Official Monster Raving Loony policy, would mean fares could be reduced, so helping people get back into work.

Sheikh Mihand (Jackie Davidson),
Official Monster Raving Loony
Party candidate for Milton Regis,
Sittingbourne



BIRTHS, MARRIAGES AND DEATHS

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BIRTHS

AKRAM

Welcome to the world Kai Teino, born 29th January 2011, to the proud parents Kelly and Habs Akram and big sister Atiya.

BEECHER

James and Sarah are pleased to announce the birth of Thomas John Beecher, born on 9th March 2011, little brother to Jack and Harry.

CHEESEMAN

Paul and Lucy are proud to announce the birth of their gorgeous baby son Charlie Peter Cheeseman, born on 22nd March 2011 at Darent Valley Hospital. A baby brother for Billy and Chelsy.

CHICK

Sarah and Peter of Westbrook are delighted to announce the birth of their beautiful daughter Eliza Faith Chick, born on 13th March 2011 at QEOM Hospital weighing 7lb 3oz. A sister for Joe, Katie, Grace and Marcie.

CHURCH

Dylan born on 22nd March 2011, weighing 7lb 9oz, son to Lee and Crystal and sibling to Jodi and Mason.

FREEMAN

Matthew and Tanya are proud to announce the birth of their beautiful baby daughter Roxanne Molly Freeman, born on 24th March 2011 at Darent Valley Hospital.

GROUT

Janie and Cliff of Ramsgate are delighted to announce the birth of their son Charles Matthew Grout, born at home on 13th March 2011 weighing 10lb. A brother for Alice.

HEWSON

Laura and Nick Hewson celebrate the birth of their son Zachary James Hewson on 15th February 2011.

HOMERSHAM

Harry Rhys Francis born on the 11th March 2011, weighing 10lb 6oz. Son to Lisa and Michael in Maidstone.

LEACH

Jade and David of Ramsgate are delighted to announce the birth of their son Max John David Leach, born on 15th March 2011 at QEOM Hospital, weighing 8lb 10oz. Our most beautiful and precious son.

MACARTNEY

Laura and Phil of Broadstairs celebrate the birth of their

beautiful daughter Lilly-May Patricia Macartney on 13th March 2011.

MAKOWSKI

Abbie May Makowski born on 14th March 2011, weighing 4lb 15oz. Daughter to proud parents Beverley and Kevin in Maidstone.

MALKIN

Lilly Ame Malkin, born on the 21st March 2011. All safe and well at 8lbs. We are very proud parents to announce the birth of our chunky monkey!

SKINNER

Claire and Stuart of Minster are delighted to announce the birth of their son Toby Stuart Skinner, born on 14th March 2011 at QEOM Hospital weighing 7lb 7oz. Our most beautiful and precious son.

TURNER

Maria and Paul are delighted to announce the birth of their son Archie Theo Paul Turner, born on 4th March 2011 at QEOM Hospital, weighing 8lb 3oz. Mummy and Daddy's special little angel.

WILSON

Laila Andrea born on 16th March 2011, weighing 9lbs 2ozs. Daughter to Jo and Alex in Manston.

DEATHS

CHAMBERS

Wilfrid Chambers died peacefully on 20th March 2011. Funeral service to be held on 4th April at St Michaels Church, Cuxton, at 10.45am.

CHIVERS

Gwendolyn Elsie Chivers passed away on 25th March 2011. Enquiries to The Co-Op Funeral Care, Dover, Kent, 01304 201581.

GREENWOOD

Hazel Hilda Greenwood of Swalecliffe passed away on March 23rd 2011. Enquiries to Woollard and Kent Funeral Directors, Whitstable, 01227 772300.

JONES

John Frederick Jones passed away 20th March 2011. Dearly loved husband of Jean, Much loved father to Carole and Kevin and father-in-law to Tony and Sharon. A special granddad to Ryan, Chloe and Lynsey. The funeral has already taken place. Donations to Kent Air Ambulance.

RAE

Joan Rae died peacefully on 19th March 2011 aged 90. Dearly loved mother of daughter Wendy and son-in-law Robert, grandmother to Julie and Paul and great grandmother to Zak, Darcie, Chayse, Jack, Tate and Ella.

excessively crowded field – which adds to the risk of collisions and falls. Horse racing is funded by punters' betting money and race-course attendance fees – in other words, it's financed by you.

As part of Animal Aid's Horse Racing Awareness Week (April 3-9), a graphic billboard will be erected in Liverpool city centre to bring home the grim reality of what happens to thoroughbreds forced to compete in races that confront them with lethal challenges. Our message is simple: don't fund the cruelty; don't bet on the Grand National.

For you it is only a harmless flutter, but horses could pay with their lives.

To order a free horse racing information pack, visit www.animalaid.org.uk.

Fiona Pereira, Animal Aid, Tonbridge

Vespa rides again

For nearly 30 years I've been collecting Vespa motor-scooters and associated memorabilia.

Needless to say, the little Vespa was a huge part of life in the 1950s and '60s when the majority of such vehicles were made.

My modest collection has been a regular feature at classic vehicle shows up and down the country, however, I am shortly to open a 1950s-style café which is to incorporate a Vespa/scooter theme, with badges, banners, pennants, etc, lining the walls.

I am particularly interested in unearthing more Vespa Club of Britain 'cog' badges (approximately 3.5 inches in the shape of a gear cog) which were issued to branch members locally, and to commemorate rallies and meetings.

If any of your readers have such treasures gathering dust, and would be interested in seeing them appreciated by a wider audience, and/or have photos/stories that they wish to share, could they contact me on 07780 136894 (I will be happy to call back), or by email at scooter_cafe_kent@yahoo.co.uk or c/o 226, Woolwich Road, Charlton, SE7 7QU.

Additionally, anyone wishing to keep abreast of progress regarding the opening of the café, feel free to drop me a line. Many thanks.

Peter Selley, Charlton

Propping up the EU

Having listened to the Budget and considered the future outlook, could there ever be a better time to get out of Europe?

Here we are with a country on its knees and we are borrowing billions to prop up Europe, lend money to Ireland and give it away to various countries where it just disappears.

David Cameron, just like Tony Blair, has taken us into another conflict that seems to have no end and costing billions.

The people of this country, from top to bottom, are paying for things nobody wants and it is time for Cameron to give the people a say in the future of his own country instead of risking the lives of our depleted forces so other people can have a say in theirs.

He knows he has no chance of convincing people that it is better to stay in Europe and no right to deny us the referendum that most want.

Start being a bit honest with your own people Mr Cameron, and keep those promises that got you elected. You can also stop using Nick Clegg as a reason for breaking them.

If the people wanted a Lib Dem government, they'd have voted one in.

RE Tucker, Sheerness

Cheer on the team

WellChild, the national charity for sick children, is calling for volunteers to come along and support our dedicated runners in the Virgin London Marathon on Sunday, April 17, at various points around the capital.

Our team of over 150 runners face the gruelling task of taking on 26.2 miles to raise as much as possible to help sick children across the UK. Why not come along and join our renowned pink and

purple supporting team in making as much noise as possible cheering them on through the blood, sweat and tears and help show them how much we appreciate their hard work.

If you'd like to be part of such a positive and eventful day – without donning your trainers in support – then we'd love to meet you and invite you to be one of WellChild's team in helping provide a boost to the runners' efforts along the way.

The fun (and it is a lot of fun) begins at approximately 8am and we need your enthusiasm until roughly 6pm. T-shirts, cheer sticks and other merchandise will be provided, as well as ponchos should they be needed. If you are interested, complete our online application form www.wellchild.org.uk.

If you have any inquiries, email me on volunteer@wellchild.org.uk or call 0845 458 8171. We hope you can come along and are looking forward to what will undoubtedly be an inspiring day for all.

Cheryl Clapham, volunteer coordinator, WellChild

Frankenstein meat

A Frankenfarm future edges closer to reality. After factory farming – and the British dairy industry's recent push towards mega-dairies – comes news from the EU that meat and milk from cloned animals will soon be flooding our supermarkets.

And here's the kick, even if we did want to avoid it we won't be able to as it won't be labelled as such.

While some may dismiss this as EU madness, the surprising news is that Caroline Spelman, the Conservative food and farming secretary, led the call to abandon moves to regulate or allow the public to identify milk or meat from clones or their descendants.

So much for consumer choice. Currently, the Food Standards Agency had declared the practice illegal. This will now change, and as there are already over 100 cloned offspring on British farms, milk and meat from them is likely to be on sale here within months.

This is not scaremongering. Very real animal welfare implications have been identified, as cloning can lead a large number of miscarriages, deformed organs and even gigantism. It has the potential to cause suffering and distress in animals that are already worked beyond their natural capacities. This "playing God" could even have unforeseen implications for human health.

The list of reasons to avoid animal products gets longer. From preventing suffering, to improving your health, to protecting the planet – we can now add avoiding products from cloned animals. For free, practical help on how to make the switch to a kinder, more ethical diet contact Vival, 8 York Court, Wilder Street, Bristol BS2 8QH or phone 0117 944 1000.

Justin Kerswell, Viva!

Felicity's tea party

I am appealing to all animal lovers to join me in supporting the Blue Cross Tea Party, a nationwide fundraising event for animals in need.

Every year, this wonderful charity takes in thousands of unwanted and abandoned pets and horses and gives them a second chance in loving new homes. And its hospitals care for sick and injured animals which would otherwise go untreated.

But they rely on donations from the public to provide this care. You can help by taking part in the Blue Cross Tea Party. Why not hold a tea party for family, friends or work colleagues and ask for donations for Blue Cross?

It's a great excuse to get baking and rustle up some cakes or biscuits for a worthy cause.

All funds raised will help the Blue Cross care for animals with nowhere else to turn, and every penny really does count. So go on, put the kettle on and sign up now at bluecrosteaparty.org.uk, or phone 08444 993 663.

Felicity Kendal, actress

A siege mentality

As a result of forensic archaeology, we are learning more about the murder of Archbishop Sudbury (Recreating face of murdered bishop, March 27).

He was killed during the Peasants' Revolt because of the high taxes he imposed as Lord Chancellor. Another Archbishop of Canterbury died because of burdensome financial impositions on the people.

St Alphege was captured, along with the Bishop of Rochester, after the siege of Canterbury by the Danes 1,000 years ago. Because he refused to let people pay a huge ransom for his release, the Danes pelted Alphege to death with ox bones on April 19, 1012.

The Church is planning to remember the millennium of St Alphege's martyrdom. But this year is the millennium of the siege of Canterbury, which ended in frightful destruction. We know the exact dates. The siege started on September 8, 1011, and ended with the sack of the city on September 29.

When I have made inquiries, I have found little civic awareness in Kent and Canterbury about the dreadful siege.

But such sufferings of our ancestors should be remembered for ever. It is getting very late to organise events, but there ought to be some official remembrance of the siege of Canterbury.

Frederic Stansfield, Canterbury

Green and so naïve

How kind of Steve Dawe of Kent Green Party to agree with me regarding overpopulation (Letters, last week).

Usually the environmentalists are so high up on their horses they are unable to hear any evidence or facts from mere mortals.

Whatever scientific evidence you can

quote, cold, hard logic and common sense dictate that wind turbines, solar panels, battery cars, etc, are just plasters to cover a very large wound, especially on an island constituting less than 0.2 per cent of the world's land mass.

Getting on for three billion people in India and China alone aspire to Western lifestyles, which means millions more cars, more consumption of oil and finite resources, more pollution, etc.

You can save your plastic bags, turn down your heating, use your car less and do all the other things that are supposed to save our planet, but if nothing is done about overpopulation and corporate and government greed, expecting year-on-year growth as the Earth's resources dwindle, you might as well spit in the sea to try to make it deeper.

Unfortunately, profligate governments who try to bribe us with our own money, have a vested interest in an increasing population to pay for their lack of financial acumen.

Save the planet? There's no possible chance of success, just a fools' paradise.

Phil Granger, West Malling

Your deadly flutter

Before readers place a bet on the Grand National, please take a moment to consider what your money may be funding.

Between 2000 and 2010, 31 horses died at the annual three-day meeting at Aintree.

In 2010 alone, five horses were killed – a fact that went largely unreported amid the hype surrounding this event.

The punishing Grand National is Britain's longest horse race – covering a distance of four miles and 856 yards. The horses are required to jump 30 formidable obstacles, some of which include perilous drops, ditches and sharp turns. Forty horses take part – an

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Review

Outside the box with Dan Clark

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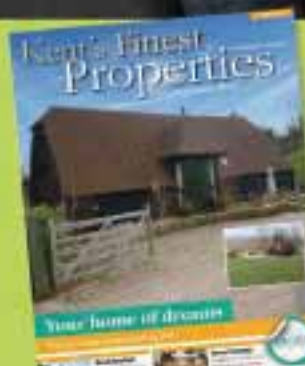
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Women Seeking

IF YOU'RE LOOKING to meet or chat to someone look no further **TXT CHAT883 to 6525** for chat with pictures, fun and safe service.

BEAUTIFUL slim Asian female, 20, seeks older, solvent gent 75 plus for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 363995**

GLASS half full N/S mid 50's woman, seeks other half. Are you a professional man, 50-60 who likes the finer things in life? **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 363969**

LORRAINE seeks trustworthy white male with GSOH for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 363793**

DONNA 35, single mum of 3, seeks male with GSOH, 35-40. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 385064**

KATE young looking, young outgoing, seeking younger male to share intimate and fun times with no lies. 20-40. **ACA. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 363941**

37YR old nurse confident, attractive, single by choice, looking for older N/S male to romance and enjoy quality times together. 45-70. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 363939**

38YR old slim professional, attractive, sporty, looking for solvent mature male for lots of fun and mutual pampering. 40-70. **ACA. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 363937**

HARDWORKING fruitcake who wears her heart on her sleeve, curvy, attractive, looking for male for cosy nights in with plenty of TLC. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 363909**

VOLUPTUOUS attractive female, divorced, no ties, looking for a confident hunk for adult fun times. No wimps need apply. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 363907**

29YR old lonely, attractive single mum looking for the kit and nice times with similar lonely male, any age, looks or status. **ACA. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 363905**

FUN outgoing lady seeks spontaneous male, 37-60, adventurous, professional, attractive. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 363331**

48YR old Asian female, average build, good looking, likes most things, seeks male for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 363321**

HONESTY is the best policy, so let's be straight, attractive blonde 29yrs seeks older male for fun, friendship/meets. Status/looks unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 363269**

ATTRACTIVE caring blue eyed blonde, 40, enjoys intimate nights in, looking for some good company, looks/age unimportant. **ACA. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 363267**

JOYCE attractive 40's feminine lady loves good times in/out looking for likeminded younger male for fun times. Can accommodate/travel. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 362859**

MALE Guardian reader? Arty, vivacious female, 61, happy in own skin, seeks N/S sociable, warm, loving man. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 360655**

SLIM attractive, elegant Asian female, likes travel, restaurants, cinema, seeks caring, Asian male, 45-55 for friendship, possible relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361571**

NAUGHTY but extremely nice 27yr old curvy, sensual, feminine female, seeking similar minded male for lots of fun. Any age? Can accommodate. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361383**

6FT blonde leggy ex lingerie model 33, looking for good times with free thinking male. Single dad welcome/Any age. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361381**

ATTRACTIVE vibrant mid 60's female, independent, likes music, travel, socialising, seeks cultured, energetic, cultured male. Maidstone. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 384766**

35YR old outgoing discreet female looking for someone who WLTM for fun adult dates. Can accommodate. Any age/status. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361757**

FLIRTY 30, very attractive confident slim brunette, looking for fun times with broadminded male. Single dad welcome. Can accommodate. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361755**

JANE 27, caring, bubbly, likes nights out, cinema, bowling, dvds, seeks male for fun and friendship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 363203**

BEAUTIFUL slim Malaysian female, 24, seeks retired solvent gent to spoil and pamper for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 363135**

FEMALE seeks kind, caring white male, 42-50, fit and clean for friendship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 363197**

41YR old busty blonde, seeking discreet male for uncomplicated mutual friendship with benefits! Any age. Call me you have nothing to lose. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 363301**

VERY single, fit, fully figured, confident, sophisticated attractive student, 19, seeking fun times in or out with outgoing confident male. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 363299**

BORED lonely housewife 39, busty attractive, leggy, blonde, WLTM male for daytime meetings. Can accommodate. Any age/status. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 363295**

VERY attractive slim blonde, social, loves travelling, can be discreet, WLTM tall mature male who can accommodate for 1-2-1 meets. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 363271**

ATTRACTIVE confident, African lady, 37, independent, HIV Positive, seeks male for companionship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 363415**

VOLUPTUOUS attractive tanned, well groomed blonde 39, looking for good times, pampering, massages and discreet friendship. **ACA. Any age/looks. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361751**

52YR old female, likes walks, animals, theatre, cinema, seeks male for companionship/LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 37291**

LATE 20's female seeking older male. Call to hear exactly what I'm like and looking for. I can meet anywhere in London at any time. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 365995**

TALL slim brunette, just 21yrs seeks interesting older male who knows what's what, show me the ways of the world. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 356969**

SOUTH London Lady, full figure with long hair, curves in all the right places. WLTM male of any age for fun, friendship and more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 356989**

FUN loving student, 21yrs, seeks male of any age for fun in London, can travel and accommodate. I love a risk and having fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 356981**

FOREIGN beauty, long, long hair, 20's yrs, seeks older male who can spoil someone like me. London area. Discretion assured. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 356967**

FEMININE lady who knows how to treat her man seeks strong minded male to care for, any area London/Surrey/Kent. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 356985**

SEALED with a kiss. 37yr old single mum, blonde hair, blue eyes, curvy, likes sunshine, travel, looking for Knight in shining armour, to make me laugh and spoil me. Folkestone. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 355543**

LADY 44, GSOH, short, curvy, dark hair, seeks good guy for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 355391**

DEBBIE mid 50's, attractive, likes dancing, music, cinema, theatre, seeks male for companionship. Maidstone. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 351419**

57YR old voluptuous lady, works, divorced, likes beach, meals out, theatre, travel, weekends away, seeks white male, 56-61 with GSOH for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 359685**



ATTRACTIVE lady, seeks kind, solvent male for romance and possibly love. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 360159**

ISABELLE lovely lady, genuine, honest, loving, caring, 68, N/S, non drinker, slightly disabled, WLTM male for love, companionship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 347305**

GORGEOUS looking lonely lass 28, OHAC, no ties, looking for some romantic liaisons with older male. **ACA/looks unimportant. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361731**

HI I am Sandy, an attractive 38yr old nurse looking for some off duty passion with affectionate open-minded man. Any age. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361729**

LADY slim, brunette, N/S, likes music, National Trust, theatre, days out, seeks sincere, honest gent, 48-60 for friendship, maybe more. **Kent/Sussex. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 360633**

SINGLE female, 60, sincere, caring, likes most things, seeks male, 60-65, N/S with GSOH for companionship and LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 360557**

EVERYDAY life getting boring? Lady seeking discreet male for fun times only. Ask no questions, I will tell no lies. Any age/looks. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 359161**

NEW to the area and seeking male companionship. Attractive singleton 32, fit, caring, anxiously awaits your call. Can travel/accommodate. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 358133**

35YR old flirty social female looking to share fun times, romance and love with special male also looking for adult companionship. **ACA. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 358131**

VERY young 40's female looking for younger man to care for, share special intimate fun times together. Can travel/accommodate. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 358129**

BEAUTIFUL slim brunette, will try anything once, varied interests, seeks laid back male for friendship, good conversations and more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 353679**

BLONDE tanned female, trendy, 46, GSOH, likes walks, pubs, nights in, seeks male. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 384852**

YOUNG 54yr old female, slim, 5ft 3ins, seeks tall, honest, caring guy for friendship/relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 362669**

SAM 37, attractive, size 16, friendly, bubbly, seeks sincere, genuine male, 35-50. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 384334**

WARM well educated 60's female, seeks similar gent to enjoy the simple things of life. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 360477**

BETH young minded widow, 65, 5ft 5ins, happy, size 14, N/S, many interests, seeks sincere, honest gent for friendship who might admit to some aching bones. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 344291**

FAYE N/S, non drinker, lots of love to give, seeks special, genuine, honest male. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 349309**

PATRICIA outgoing, confident, feminine, warm, friendly, smart, good company, attractive, seeks similar male. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 347215**

64YR old female, 5ft 2ins, GSOH, likes golf, seeks male with GSOH for friendship, days out, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 339581**

FEMALE 25, professional, likes nights out, socialising, seeks male. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 360961**

ORIENTAL female, 27, seeks older gent, 65 plus to take care of me. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 362207**

BEAUTIFUL slim, sexy female, 22, seeks older gent, 65 plus to take care of me. London. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 362201**

PRETTY woman, slim, black, widow, 39, energetic, seeks white, solvent male for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 360695**

CURVY sophisticated Irish lady 36, new to the area and lonely, WLTM male up to 69yrs for companionship, cosy nights in/out. Status unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361379**

KAREN tall slim feminine, 40, WLTM genuine male who will keep me warm and cosy up for romantic nights in/out. **ACA. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361357**

42YR old female, likes music, dancing, writing, astrology, cats, seeks male with GSOH and similar age. Medway. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 351577**

CARING young 62 petite blonde, seeks someone to share doing things with, theatre, dancing and perhaps nights in. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 359761**

IF YOU'RE LOOKING to meet or chat to someone look no further **TXT CHAT883 to 6525** for chat with pictures, fun and safe service.

NICE guy likes nights in/out, pubs, cinema, socialising, seeks female for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 364019**

LOVELY active, kind, elderly gent likes walks, meals out, WLTM youngish lady for friendship and companionship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 364001**

BENJAMIN kind, caring, seeks female for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 363991**

THERE'S many a fine tune played on an old fiddle! N/S widower 64, 5ft 9ins, likes socialising, theatre etc, seeks slim, sophisticated lady to pluck her heart strings. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 363933**

LONELY female, petite, attractive, size 8-10, blue eyes, long hair, likes historic places, holidays, meals out, seeks honest, genuine male for friendship initially. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 356359**

TINKERBELLE seeks Peter Pan, I'm 36, 5ft 3ins, size 8-10 and am looking for a tall strong man who can connect and make me laugh. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 358721**

SUZANNE 35, beautiful blonde, seeks discreet male for chats and a relaxing glass of wine anytime. **ACA, status unimportant. City area. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 342527**

KATHY long blonde hair, blue eyes, 60, likes mowtown music, nights in/out, seeks gent, 47-62. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361797**

BARBARA 46, seeks nice, stocky male up to 50 for friendship, maybe more. Heathrow. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361701**

SALLY independent, intelligent, confident, caring female, seeking a similar soul mate. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361575**

MANDY early 40's, slightly alternative, looking for similar open minded male for fun nights in/out. Can accommodate. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361727**

YOUNG 40's lady who loves cooking and enjoying good wine and older male for cosy nights in and great company. Status unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 359163**

HONEST caring, genuine female, 44, GSOH, likes meals out, nights in, seeks similar male. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 381844**

MARY 62, 5ft 3ins, medium build, blonde, blue eyes, likes nights in/out, seeks honest male for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 359467**

SALLY petite, confident lady, happy go lucky, likes dancing, walks, tv, seeks male/soul mate for friendship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 362665**

PROFESSIONAL brunette, green eyes, petite, solvent, OHAC, looking for good adult companionship with likeminded male. Any status. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 362951**

ATTRACTIVE slim well educated spontaneous blonde, 36, fed up with being alone WLTM keen tactile man who's up for a challenge. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 362887**

NEW to area, happy female with no ties and easy to please, looking for genuine manly man for friendship, dates and more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 362885**

28YR old slim blonde female, varied interests, looking for uncomplicated friendship with open minded man. Status/looks/Age unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 362865**

DAVID 61, proud of it, fanciable, poetic, likes participation, disciplined, adventurous. Croydon. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 357791**

DAVID 61, likes sports, reading, writing, seeks female. Bushey. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 362779**

GENT 62, assertive, many interests, seeks curvy, non assertive lady for exciting relationship that offers something different. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 362977**

RICHARD 46, dark hair, blue eyes, 5ft 6ins, easygoing, genuine, likes holidays, theatre, music, cooking, beach walks, countryside, cinema, seeks similar female 36-57 for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 363903**

MICHAEL 31, seeks similar female for fun times, cosy evenings etc. London. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 385134**

HARRY 47, medium build, 5ft 10ins, cropped hair, likes reading, swimming, walks, cinema, seeks honest, caring lady 40-55. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 385132**

ACTOR 48, wants to be pampered and looked after by older, solvent lady in return for adult fun and companionship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 385126**

PETER 62, varied interests, no ties, reliable, understanding, romantic, seeks cuddly female, 50-67. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 362943**

SINGLE male, 50 plus, seeks buxom, busty female, 35-55. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 363773**

MALE 62, seeks female, 60-70 for companionship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 385108**

SINGLE dad, 47, many interests, seeks female for happy LTR. Dover. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 385104**

CHRIS 64, 5ft 10ins, blue eyes, seeks caring, honest, loving, genuine lady, 55-62 for friendship and TLC. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 363735**

28YR old Asian male, slim, honest, funny, outgoing, likes socialising, seeks female. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 363543**

NICE looking black male, tall, slim, likes most things, seeks female, any age for fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 385084**

STEVE 45, own business, likes travel, theatre, music, meals out, cooking, seeks young lady, 18-22 for fun times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 363563**

FIT good looking dark haired male, seeks slim, white, attractive female for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 363487**

DANNY 41, attractive, likes cooking, music, walks, conversation, seeks slim, attractive, honest, faithful female to share life with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 363413**

STEVEN 50, likes nights in, 5ft 3ins, 8st, seeks female for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 362789**

DAVID 61, proud of it, fanciable, poetic, likes participation, disciplined, adventurous. Croydon. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 357791**

DAVID 61, likes sports, reading, writing, seeks female. Bushey. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 362779**

GENT 62, assertive, many interests, seeks curvy, non assertive lady for exciting relationship that offers something different. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 362977**

RICHARD 46, dark hair, blue eyes, 5ft 6ins, likes holidays, cooking, theatre, country walks, meals out, cinema, music, seeks female, 39-57 for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 362925**

MALE seeks female for fun and friendship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 384890**

LEE tactile, handsome, seeks female, 38-60 for fun and good times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361501**

TALL slim, fit, well dressed gent, late 70's, seeks slim, elegant lady for dining out and companionship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361463**

PETER 62, varied interests, no ties, reliable, understanding, romantic, seeks cuddly female, 50-67. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 362943**

RIO

55, ex airline pilot, seeks female for friendship, relationship, outings and socialising. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 362825**

GEORGE seeks white female, 40-60 for no strings fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 384872**

TALL handsome British gent, 39, seeks lady 20-35 to spice up life. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 363373**

IRRESISTIBLE Knight! Stylish male, 5ft 9ins, likes music, film, art, seeks shapely fair maiden, 28-38 for enjoyable times, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 363209**

ANDREW 5ft 10ins, easygoing, spontaneous, adventurous, seeks female for fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361445**

FUN loving professional male, 42, independent, likes good things, seeks female for LTR. Don't mind animals/children. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 384750**



Meet robotic film stars

FANS of science fiction will get a chance to see some of its most interesting creations in an exhibition of robots at Chatham Historic Dockyard.

The event includes a collection of robots, cyborgs and androids and includes many props and costumes from film and promotional material.

The metal stars of the big screen on show

include Robby the Robot from the Hollywood movie *Forbidden Planet*.

Film fans will also recognise a vintage Robocop and a B9 robot torso made by Andy Shaw, the original Dalek builder.

Fem-bots are represented with the beautiful Grace exposed in all her glory and Sonny, who starred alongside Will Smith in the film *I, Robot*. There will also be domestic robots such as those shown on *Tomorrow's World*.

During the half-term holidays and bank-holiday weekend, Riveting Robots workshops

will also be part of the exhibition. Children can enjoy making robots and win robot-themed party games and a giant robot sculpture. There will also be a chance to use radio-controlled robots.

Robot – A Collection Of Robots, Cyborgs And Androids starts on Monday, April 4, and runs until Friday, June 17.

Riveting Robot workshops are all included in the normal admission price to The Historic Dockyard. For more details and prices, visit www.thedockyard.co.uk/steamandtransport.



Live and local

MUSIC promoter WhitLive is adding support slots to its concerts at the East Quay in Whitstable.

The move is to give local bands a chance to entertain crowds at the venue.

On Saturday, April 30, Whitstable band Natural Selection will be supporting the Blockheads. The band are described as a cross between funk, blues hip-hop and jazz.

Then on Friday, May 20, punk flamenco band Tener Duende, above, will support Adrian Edmondson and the Bad Shepherds.

WhitLive director Jane Lindsey said: "I am so pleased that we have been able to add the local-band support slot. There is such a wealth of fantastic musicians and bands in Whitstable and in Kent and we are honoured to be able to see some of them at our gigs."

For more on events promoted by WhitLive, email Jane Lindsey on jane@whitlive.co.uk or visit www.whitlive.co.uk.



Share spring beauty with your Mum

HOLE Park Gardens at Rolvenden makes the perfect destination for Mother's Day this spring as the 15-acre gardens blossom into swathes of tulips, magnolias and azaleas.

Carpets of bluebells and wild-meadow flowers provide contrast with ornamental topiary and wide lawns. The natural gardens feature rhododendrons, primulas and heathers. The garden is surrounded by parkland and boasts views across the Weald. Fountains, a walled rose garden and wrought-iron gates complete the scene.

After enjoying the gardens, guests can visit the tea rooms, which offer light lunches and homemade cakes. Take home produce in the form of jam and honey made from the fruit and bees on the estate.

Ales brewed at the Old Dairy Brewery will be on sale, as will plants and flowers.

Visitors can experience the spring spectacular every day until May 31, during which time the gardens are open from 11am to 6pm. Admission is £6 for adults and £1 for children. Season tickets are available.

See www.holepark.com or phone 01580 241 344/386 for more information.

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ATTRACTIONS



You can be fit as a fiddle in free class

IT seems the recent revival of TV dance programmes has had a knock-on effect on the wider population.

Free dance lessons for anyone over 50 are available at the Stour Centre, Ashford, as part of Age UK's Fit As A Fiddle scheme.

The classes will cover a range of styles from the 17th century to the present day and are aimed at beginners.

John Sweeney of Contrafusion, who will teach the classes with his partner Karen, said: "Lots of people watch dancing on TV and decide they'd like to try it but find it too hard."

"We teach partner dances, but you don't have to bring a partner as the idea is to change partners for every dance – it's much more sociable and great fun."

The couple, who have danced all over the world since their teenage years, ensure the steps can be followed by walking them through and 'calling' each move.

Sweeney said: "Dancing has given us incredible pleasure throughout our lives and we want to bring that same joy to lots more people through these great social dances."

Classes will run from 2pm to 3.30pm on Thursdays until May 26. For more information, visit www.contrafusion.co.uk.

Dancer comes back to her roots during national tour

A TOP ballet student from Sevenoaks will return to Kent to perform with the Ballet Central UK tour.

Nicole Craddock, who is training to become a professional dancer at London Central School of Ballet, will be graduating this summer.

This will be her first experience of being on tour, which is seen as the best way for students to get a taste of life in a professional touring company.

Ballet Central will visit two venues in Kent this spring as part of its 2011 UK-wide tour, appearing at the EM Forster Theatre at Tonbridge School on Friday, April 8, and then at The Gulbenkian theatre in Canterbury on Thursday, April 28.

This year will be this unique student ballet company's 26th tour, with visits to 20 venues across the UK, including the Royal Opera House.

Audiences will see classical and neo-classical ballet, dynamic contemporary dance, jazz works, narrative pieces and even street dance.

Musical director Philip Feeney will provide live accompaniment.

School director Sara Matthews said:

"We are the

only vocational ballet school to offer an honours degree and pre-professional touring on such a scale.

"Ballet Central continues to be a springboard for hundreds of dancers into some of the top international dance companies."

To book tickets for the Tonbridge performance, at the EM Forster Theatre, phone 01732 304241 or alternatively visit www.emftheatre.com.

To book tickets for the Canterbury performance, you can phone 01227 769075 or visit www.thegulbenkian.co.uk.



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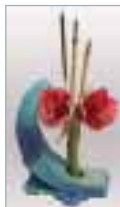
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CALAMITY JANE
Calamity Jane, Wed 13 - Sat 18 April

www.orchardtheatre.co.uk
TICKET OFFICE 01322 220000

A bright star of jazz music

BRITISH jazz award-winner Stacey Kent is bringing her music to Canterbury.

A native of New Jersey, Kent developed a childhood fascination for musical comedies and the great jazz masters as well as folk-singers such as Neil Young.

With the release of her first solo album, *Close Your Eyes*, in 1997, the critics saluted the birth of a new jazz star. She has impeccable phrasing, a clear voice and a singular style that blends sensitivity and sophistication. Her covers of standards from the Great American Songbook and Brazilian repertoires are always imbued with her own contemporary style.

Kent has already established herself as one of the new century's brightest jazz revelations. Voted best jazz vocalist at the 2001 British Jazz Awards, and the 2002 BBC Jazz Awards, she was also a 2009 Grammy nominee.

She will be appearing at The Gulbenkian on Thursday, April 21, at 7.45pm.

Tickets are priced at £20, or £18 for Encore! members. To book, phone 01227 769075 or visit www.thegulbenkian.co.uk.

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ATTRACTIONS



Bubbling over with excitement

CHILDREN will get a chance to learn all about the physics and splendour of bubbles when American expert Louis Pearl comes to Canterbury.

The bubble-maker extraordinaire will be floating his way to The Gulbenkian theatre with his spectacular show.

Pearl has been creating amazing bubbles professionally since 1980. He has written two books about bubbles, made a video called Lights, Camera, Bubbles and has so far created 21 bubble inventions.

Pearl uses his show to teach about the physics behind the floating orbs. He teaches about surface tension, minimum surface areas, the Bernoulli Effect, the Venturi Effect, bubble colour and bubble chemistry.

So if you have ever wondered how bubbles are possible, how bubbles pop or why soap and water make bubbles, Pearl has the answers.

The Amazing Bubble Show is on Saturday, April 16, at 2pm at The Gulbenkian. Tickets are £8, £7 for Encore! members and £35

for a family-and-friends ticket (five people). The show is suitable for ages three and above.

To book, call 01227 769075 or visit www.thegulbenkian.co.uk.



SHOWS

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Remember you're a star

IF you are looking to tone up or drop a few pounds before the summer bikini season, going to the gym can often be a little boring and lonely.

So to help you out, Maidstone fitness and diet expert Star Monroe will be putting together another of her tried and tested Sexy Body Days.

Star said: "Let my friends and I help you explore and discover your sensual, vibrant and playful sides with my women's-only one-day lifestyle experience."

"From enlightening talks to fun play shops, to luxurious pampering, and not forgetting a unique shopping experience, this exciting day will take you on an exhilarating journey

that will recharge and reset your womanly superpowers."

The event will include teaching burlesque dancing, heavenly hula-hooping, belly-dancing, the Sexy Curves programme and the party dance with live DJ. There will also be body confidence and posture tips, style and glamour talks as well as a walking-in-high-heels master class.

The Sexy Body Day is set to take place on Saturday, April 16, at the Village Hotel, Maidstone.

Tickets start at £69 and are available from www.gsmsexybodyday.eventbrite.com. For more information about Star Monroe, visit www.goddessstarmonroe.com.



SHOWS

BOOKING FOR 2011

Queen Elizabeth's Elephant
Sun 3rd April 7:30pm
£14/£12
Based on a real historical account, this new comedy was developed by Chalkfoot (Laurel and Hardy, The Riddle of the Sands) working with three Kent communities

Lilies on the Land
Tues 5th April 7:30pm
£14/£12
Lilies on the Land is a truly remarkable and sparkling piece of theatre which celebrates an extraordinary episode in Britain's history – the Women's Land Army of World War II

Hamlet
Wed 13th & Thurs 14th April 7:30pm
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Ha Ha Holmes!
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www.theatreroyalmanston.co.uk 01227 769075

Theatre Royal Manston

FOOD & DRINK

This little fish is a perfect catch

RESTAURANT REVIEW

BY SARAH ROSS

DARE I say it, but Whitstable eat your heart out. Even more so Canterbury – and, come to think of it (with the rare exception), the rest of east Kent. The grand surprise is Le Petit Poisson in Herne Bay.

Perched on the town's seafront, I had passed this small, unassuming restaurant a few times over the years without ever paying it much attention.

Herne Bay has never seemed the place to go for a good meal out, but friends in the town recommended this place highly. Indeed, they could almost be classed as regulars and have sometimes taken their young daughter there for an early supper – always a good sign.

Le Petit Poisson has recently been refurbished and enlarged, but it's still a small, intimate place with a real Continental feel – no frills or anything too fancy.

The same could be said of the menu (neatly scribed on blackboards): a choice of eight or so starters and the same number of main courses (plus a special). Small but perfectly formed. And it really was.

I chose moules marinières (£4.95) to start – I thought after the order had gone in that perhaps I should have been more adventurous but soon changed my mind when it appeared.

Steaming hot and perfectly cooked, the pile



of mussels (and this was a small portion!) did not have that overpowering taste and smell of garlic so often harboured by this dish.

My sole regret was that the lovely French bread I would have used to mop up the juices had already been eaten, along with a complimentary bowl of olives, before the starter arrived (it had been a long time since lunch).

My guest went for rock oysters – he felt he had to when dining in these parts.

The truth, however, was that wherever in the world he was, these oysters would have taken some beating. There was a choice of three preparations – he skipped natural on this occasion and opted for three battered with lemon mayonnaise (£1.15 each) and three grilled with garlic, parsley and Parmesan (£1.25 each).

All were cooked to perfection, he said, the grilled version just edging out the battered if he were asked to name a favourite.

His main was a no-contest – with skate one of his favourite dishes anywhere, fish restaurant or otherwise, the pan-fried skate with lemon and caper butter (£14.50) was always going to win out here. Presented beautifully on crisp, flavoursome new potatoes, it was every bit as good as he had hoped.

Baked fillet of bass with a pinenut crust and red-wine shallots served on a bed of garlicky greens (again, not too overpowering) with new potatoes (£14.50) was my choice. Perfectly cooked and presented, it was divine.

The bass fell apart on the fork yet still retained its texture and taste.

The potato and greens were a great accompaniment, but it was the sweet, tanginess of the onion that best complemented the fish.

I am forever trying to cut back on the naughty things in life (food-wise). I was, on this occasion, though, happy to throw caution to the wind and calorie-intake rules out of the window for the sticky-toffee pudding and honeycomb parfait (£4.95).

A thick, finger-length slab of both were

just perfect, the parfait particularly delightful.

My guest had lemon cheesecake and lemon sorbet for his dessert (£5.25). Again, excellent.

A bottle of the Argentinian house white – Trivento Chardonnay Torrontés (£11.95) – and freshly-ground coffees contributed to a final bill of £72.05, which was just about spot on.

A few miles up the road in trendy Whitstable, you could have added £20 or £30 to that in some establishments.

All in all, Le Petit Poisson had provided a flawless evening out. The venue is attractively designed inside, although my guest preferred upstairs to downstairs, which he thought was a little overwhelmed by the open-plan kitchen.

Purely a personal feeling, you understand, but he thought the 'kitchen window' was a little large for any real feeling of intimacy among diners.

This very minor qualm aside, all was good – really good. The service complemented the food perfectly – friendly, polite and low-key. Our Belgian host (and co-partner in the restaurant) was charming and chatty – and knew when to stop.

And my guest was particularly impressed when he asked the young waiter for an Irish coffee and he admitted it would have to be a Scottish because the restaurant whisky was, well, Scottish and not Irish.

This young man, like the restaurant he works in, will go far.

Le Petit Poisson

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From Don's off-kilter life to Dan's stand-up

Cult TV star Clark's Gulbenkian date



Review

BY ED HILL

DAN Clark is the star of cult BBC3 comedy *How Not To Live Your Life*, a show centred on Don Danbury, a neurotic young man with no friends who lives in a large house left to him by his grandmother.

It follows Don's unsuccessful attempts to get many of the basics of life sorted. His efforts at work, friendship and love are all hindered by an overactive imagination which shows him all the things that could go wrong.

Clark admits Don is an idiot, but a lot of his actions are inspired by his own character.

He said: "My friends would say I'm more like him than I would care to admit, but there is one huge difference between me and Don: he has no self-awareness whatsoever.

"I'm a lot more concerned about what people think of me. When I am writing Don, it doesn't take much for me to know what he would do. He is all my worst characteristics in one."

The show is quirky, with a strange set of personalities surrounding the main character.

These include Eddie, a carer who continues to look after Don after his grandmother dies; elderly foul-mouthed neighbour Mrs Treacher; and his female housemates, who Don fruitlessly pursues.

Clark says that when he first developed the show he wanted to get away from the naturalistic comedy that had been a success in such shows as *The Office*.

"I wanted to create something that was heightened. Not cartoonish or totally surreal, but a bit off-kilter with unusual characters.

"Eddie was important because we wanted Don to be a loner with no friends but needed him to have a confidant. So we created this super-nice person who was actually a bit creepy because he is so nice," he said.

There have been three series of the show, which has steadily developed a strong fan base after a low-key start.

Clark is hoping more will be commissioned by the BBC but continues to work on other TV projects. In the meantime, fans can get a chance to see him live when he brings his show to Canterbury this month.

The 34-year-old is looking forward to performing in front of an audience again.

He said: "Making TV is rewarding and fun. I quite enjoy getting into the production side of things, but it's more like having a job, doing things by committee that take a long time.

"Sometimes it's hard to remember – when you wrote something five months ago – why it was funny. Doing stand-up, you get an immediate response and a real buzz."

Clark is no stranger to live comedy, having performed sketch shows and stand-up from his early 20s. One of his topics for this tour is modern communication.

He said: "I talk about this sort of bubble that I have created for myself. I communicate with almost everyone through Facebook or Twitter. When I actually have to talk to someone on a phone I almost have a panic attack.

"Texting was great at first because you could communicate with people you didn't actually

ON THE RISE:
Dan Clark is bringing his stand-up and comedy music show to Kent



AT EASE: Clark is relaxed about the slowburn of his cult TV show



want to talk to, but then I started doing it with the people I liked as well. I seem to have lots of friends online, but it doesn't make my actual social skills in real life any better."

As well as stand-up, Clark will be performing songs with Ben Parker, who works on the music for the television series.

He said: "I always liked comedy songs but just felt people weren't doing them well. But in the last couple of years people like Tim Minchin and Flight of the Concords have come along. They've made them less cringeworthy. They're funny, but they're also really good songs in themselves.

"I used to do a monthly night in London when I would have a section where I would play some music. When I was putting this show together, I realised I had all this material, so I decided to perform the songs for the first time on tour. It gives the show a different flavour for the second half."

Clark, who has also appeared on many comedy shows down the years including *Only Fools And Horses* and *The Mighty Boosh*, is keen to continue writing his own material.

He said: "You have to keep the plates spinning. If for some reason we decide not to do more *How Not To Live*, I want to know I can soon move on to the next project.

"Obviously I would like a big hit on BBC1, but *How Not To Live Your Life* has allowed me to develop in a less pressured environment.

"The first series wasn't that well known about, then with the second people started to notice, and we did even better by the third series. I haven't had that scrutiny from people saying 'What is he going to do next?'. I don't feel huge pressure with the next TV show."

Television also helps raise a performer's profile, leading to a new experience for the comedian.

"The last time I toured, people would come and see me, but they didn't know who I was so you'd have to spend the first five minutes winning them over," said Clark.

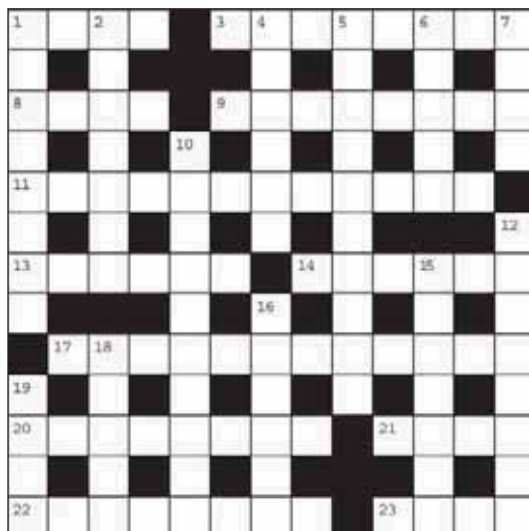
"Now I walk onstage and 80 per cent of the audience know me from the TV show. It's such a good feeling when you walk out and know they are already excited to see you."

• Dan Clark is appearing at The Gulbenkian, Canterbury, on Tuesday, April 12, from 7.45pm. Tickets cost £15. Visit www.kent.ac.uk/gulbenkian for more information.

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Waterstone's in Tunbridge Wells will present a £10 book token for the correct entry of the cryptic crossword picked at random. Send your completed grids to KoS, Prize Crossword, Apple Barn, Smeeth, Ashford, TN25 6SS. Closing date is Wednesday, April 6, 2011.

CRYPTIC CLUES

Across

- 1 Graduate joins the navy by the grain store (4)
- 3 Set a boss up with material (8)
- 8 Little Robert has many a weapon (4)
- 9 Get right in the vehicle with less change here (8)
- 11 Labour end by first deciding to go out for a drink (6,6)
- 13 Man accompanies his offspring to the class (6)
- 14 Rock pieces based on a song Ravel wrote (6)
- 17 My word! Virtuous and courteous! (4,8)
- 20 Rugby players take a long time to find parcels (8)
- 21 Said to be the destiny of the bazaar (4)
- 22 Confused scorer met the Queen and could become a wizard (8)
- 23 Remain by the southern river (4)

Down

- 1 Bad boy somehow got two pounds for a toy (4,4)
- 2 Unsubstantiated assertions that the drink belongs to us (7)
- 4 Clerk finds cheat in one quarter (6)
- 5 A 1-star cafe relocated here (4,6)
- 6 Step on a tyre ... (5)
- 7 ... and leave the person indifferent (2-2)
- 10 Can make old ingredients into this (6,4)
- 12 Try blues out in windy conditions (8)
- 15 Severe, but not live anyway (7)
- 16 Join Reg at EEC meeting taking place here (6)
- 18 A large vehicle for a cinema award (5)
- 19 Love to drink up at work (4)

QUICK CLUES

Across

- 1 Notch (4)
- 3 Raider (8)
- 8 Spoken (4)
- 9 Resounding (8)
- 11 Dissembling (12)
- 13 Muddy (6)
- 14 Spruce (6)
- 17 Potency (12)
- 20 Flying (8)
- 21 Scoff (4)
- 22 Determined (8)
- 23 Brink (4)

Down

- 1 Beginner (8)
- 2 Bell-tongue (7)
- 4 Vinegary (6)
- 5 Hateful (10)
- 6 Play (5)
- 7 Chide (4)
- 10 Fortuitous (10)
- 12 Jam (8)
- 15 Feign (7)
- 16 Endeavour (6)
- 18 Skips (5)
- 19 Den (4)

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CRYPTIC SOLUTIONS 433: Across: 1 Court jester; 9 Baroque; 10 Again; 11 Undue; 12 Episode; 13 Equity; 15 Precise; 18 Nervous; 20 Deter; 22 Red tape; 23 Orangery; 24 Departments. Down: 1 Nick; 3 Marauder; 8 Oral; 9 Resonant; 11 Hypocritical; 13 Turbid; 14 Dapper; 17 Powerfulness; 20 Aviation; 21 Jeer; 22 Resolute; 23 Edge. **Down:** 1 Neophyte; 2 Clapper; 4 Aether; 5 Abominable; 6 Drama; 7 Rate; 10 Accidental; 12 Preserve; 15 Pretend; 16 Effort; 18 Omit; 19 Lair.

• The winner of last week's crossword, no 432, is Michael Charles, of Gravesend



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I DON'T BELIEVE IT! The Early Day Motion aims to protect property-owners from roving squatters, some of whom can cause costly damage

Campaigners fight to make squatting illegal

CALLS for squatting to be made illegal are coming from landlords' groups and some MPs.

Mike Weatherley MP wants support for an Early Day Motion calling for occupying someone else's property without paying rent to be criminalised.

The EDM has already been backed by 19 other MPs from both sides of the House of Commons. Campaign group Landlord Action is calling on homeowners to support the bid in two ways.

Firstly, they can sign a petition being presented at Downing Street, and secondly, by writing to their local MP encouraging them to back the campaign.

The group say current laws enable squatters to move into someone else's house, cause damage to it and then – once the owner manages to persuade the courts to take action to protect his elementary right to live in his own house – move on to another victim.

Squatters take advantage of the fact that in England and Wales, occupying someone else's

By **NICK AMES**

house is not illegal. What is against the law is entering uninvited or using force or fraud.

To evict squatters, a homeowner has to prove that they entered his house without permission.

However, once an eviction order is obtained, the squatters face no punishment and are free to target another property.

In Scotland, squatting is against the law.

Yogesh Chandarana, spokesman for Landlord Action, said: "Essentially, squatters consume services they have not paid for. Many would feel that it is wrong."

"We have been advocates of homeowner rights for over 10 years, and we have seen the situation getting worse. It is reassuring to see that MPs such as Mike Weatherley are taking action to help the situation."

A spate of high-profile, well-publicised cases have brought squatting to the forefront recently, highlighting the growing injustice being done to homeowners by squatters,

many of whom travel thousands of miles to engage in squatting knowing they will be protected by the law.

In one example, squatters in Brighton made a Freedom of Information request to see which council homes were empty.

An obvious strategy to target homes, it clearly demonstrates the level of organisation that squatters are now achieving.

Mr Weatherley said: "The problem is that squatting is not a criminal act, so they get evicted from one home and simply move on to another, to then be evicted and evicted and evicted. Brighton and Hove has been plagued by a number of repeat squatting cases and in at least the last seven years, police have made no squatting prosecutions due to the difficulties in obtaining evidence that technical criminal infringements have been made."

"We need to criminalise this act so these people can be held to account for their actions and we hope that the recent media attention around this topic will drum up enough support for the EDM to be submitted for debate in the House of Commons."



Savour your outdoor space on roof terrace

PROPERTY company Berkeley's new development rates outside spaces as being as important as interiors, with balconies and terraces a valuable extension of the home.

Berkeley has designed a new show home at Holborough Lakes, near Snodland, with a first-floor terrace extending from the lounge to provide a living space.

All the homes at the new development are built in keeping with a contemporary New England design, which features a white weatherboard façade with sleek geometric lines complementing the natural surroundings.

Arranged over three storeys, the three-bedroom property includes a private garden as well as the first-floor terrace.

The ground floor accommodates an open-plan kitchen and family room for parents who enjoy cooking while both entertaining guests and keeping a watchful eye on the children.

With individually-designed kitchens, this area has an informal dining area and extends out to the garden, making it an ideal place to enjoy sunny days by dining alfresco. There is also a guest cloakroom and separate utility room on the ground floor.

The first floor features the terrace that extends from the living area to provide the perfect place to relax and enjoy the surroundings. The second bedroom and family bathroom complete the accommodation on this floor. Upstairs on the second floor, the master bedroom suite has fitted wardrobes and an en-suite shower room.

The third bedroom has built-in wardrobes and there is additional storage space.

Interior designer Aimee Rook, from Callister Russell, said: "The show home was designed with a classic contemporary style in mind to appeal to a wide demographic."

"The upper living area offers an elegant style of furniture and uses a colour palette contrasting in navy and gold with warm-textured feature wallpaper. The focal point is the large double door leading to the terrace area."

"These were dressed with curtains in a beautiful navy fabric to frame this feature."

Holborough Lakes offers a combination of New England-designed one- and two-bedroom apartments and three- and five-bedroom family houses built around a waterside setting.

The freshwater lakes, play areas and woodland provide the perfect place to explore, discover and exercise. There is also a diving and water-sports academy, a private residents-only gym and designated fishing zones.

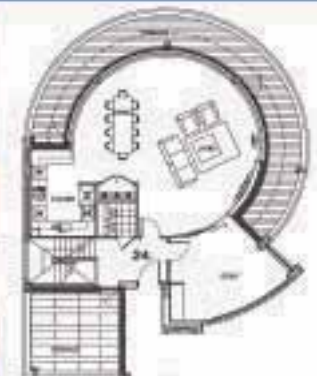
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It's jobs for Kent

Rewarding switch into classroom

WOULD-be teachers are being urged to take the plunge and consider a career change into education.

According to the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA), more than half of about 11,600 teacher training inquiries in the South East last year were from people looking to change jobs.

Last month the organisation, which is responsible for the training and development of the national school workforce, held a 'discover teaching' seminar at Sandwich Technology School.

South East regional lead Balj Bhinder said: "In Kent we are fortunate to have such a wide choice of excellent places that provide teacher training.

"Teaching is a career that involves a lot of hard work but comes with incredible rewards.

"Immense satisfaction goes hand-in-hand when working with students as you watch them develop and succeed in their studies and there are excellent benefits in terms of earning potential and career development.

"When I visit schools in the county, I am impressed by the students and teachers in equal measure.

"There is always a strong sense of purpose within our schools, and this is testament to the skills of our teachers."

According to the TDA, the number of head teachers aged 30-44 increased by a third between 2004 and 2009.

On average, teachers in the South East earn £35,900 per annum with the potential to earn up to £56,950.

"Since I made the switch to teaching, I've never looked back," said Faye Thorndycroft, a science teacher at the Robert Napier School in Gillingham.

"It's certainly challenging but the rewards are immense. I can see how my work makes a difference to pupils every day.

"Not many professions offer the same sense of fulfilment."

Click on www.teach.gov.uk for more details.

Keep Kent Working! It's jobs for Kent



LET'S DO LAUNCH: From left – Marsh Academy chairman of governors Robert Alston, school head Marion Emptage, Lord Howard, Cllr Paul Carter, executive principal Tracy Luke, head boy Simon Tallis and Damian Collins MP at the House of Lords in Westminster

Skills on the march with Marsh launch

By **STEVE KNIGHT**

steve.knightl@kosmedia.co.uk

A UNIQUE skills festival focusing on careers in and around Romney Marsh will be held next month.

The two-day event, at the Marsh Academy on May 6 and 7, is the first of its kind in Kent and will also provide career guidance and information on apprenticeships.

Kent County Council leader Cllr Paul Carter was among those who attended a party at the House of Lords to officially launch the festival, which is also being supported by City of London livery companies.

He said: "KCC believes emphatically in the need for good vocational and skills training.

"We have shown this over the years with the development of our network of vocational centres and a curriculum which offers quality training for all those who want it.

"The Romney Marsh Skills Festival is a tremendous opportunity to broaden horizons and encourage young people to develop the

skills and experience that will help their careers to thrive and prosper in the years ahead."

The first day of the event will see 500 students from across Romney Marsh, Ashford and Shepway take part in taster sessions and speak with young people already working in a sector that interests them, to get advice before making their GCSE option choices.

The second will give talented post-16 students the chance to participate in full-day masterclasses in the six employment sectors of construction, fashion, energy and engineering, IT and telecoms, rural economy, and marine and maritime.

There will also be an exhibition exploring the history and development of Romney Marsh, apprenticeships, career guidance and more.

Folkestone and Hythe MP Damian Collins was also at the launch party, as was his predecessor and former Conservative Party leader, Lord Howard.

Mr Collins said: "The festival is a wonderful opportunity for young people and their

parents to learn more about the array of skills, training and careers opportunities that are available.

"It is a great way of raising young people's ambitions and providing new and exciting options as they consider their next steps into work or training.

"The innovative link with the City livery companies adds an exciting new dimension that will present a tremendous mix of new and traditional skills, which I hope will inspire and excite young people as they make important decisions about their future learning and careers."

WHAT is your business doing to help Keep Kent Working?

Are you running an apprenticeship scheme to attract young workers? Are your employees being sent on training courses to aid their personal development? Or are you funding a university scholarship to help find the businessmen and women of the future?

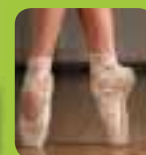
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The ladder of success

VULNERABLE children from a Folkestone secondary school have successfully completed a unique course run by Kent Fire and Rescue Service.

The BTEC Level 2 fire and rescue service in the community qualification is offered to pupils aged 14 to 16 who struggle in a conventional school environment, and was taken up by nine youngsters from Pent Valley Technology College.

In addition to teaching specific firefighting skills, the course also attempts to tackle antisocial behaviour and negative attitudes towards authority.

Community safety manager Charlie Smith said: "The course provides a vocational learning opportunity to a diverse range of young people who may struggle to achieve academic success within traditional styles of learning.

"By working away from the classroom environment and interacting with professional firefighters and instructors, stu-

dents engage and develop a positive approach to learning, building their self-esteem and confidence.

"The course also helps to raise their sense of personal responsibility and improve social awareness of community issues such as fire prevention and the consequences of arson."

Joint-funded by Kent Fire and Rescue and the Shepway Community Safety Partnership (CSP), the BTEC is equivalent to a GCSE at grade A-C level.

The youngsters who took part spent six weeks training at Folkestone fire station.

CSP antisocial behaviour manager Shaun Taylor said: "The positive change in behaviour and impact on the young people has been evident throughout the course.

"The most pleasing moment for me was when one of the boys' grandmother saw the final exercise and was overwhelmed by how her grandson's attitude had changed for the better."



HIGH RISE: Gary Kellett and Akram Fahmi with course leader John Bell, right

Reaching for the sky

TWO architecture students from the University for the Creative Arts have received honourable mentions in a major international skyscraper competition.

Final year students Gary Kellett and Akram Fahmi, who are both based on the Canterbury campus, were praised by a panel of judges working on the eVolo Magazine contest. The competition recognises outstanding ideas that redefine skyscraper design through the use of new technologies, materials, programmes and so on.

UCA course leader John Bell said: "It is a

great achievement for Gary and Akram individually, and for the graduate diploma at UCA Canterbury, that we have managed to gain two honourable mentions in this prestigious competition.

"They both took strong environmental stances in their submissions and challenged conventional notions of the skyscraper, which is why I believe they did so well.

"Their projects were submitted within the first few weeks of the first semester, which makes their achievements all the more gratifying."

Dramatic 10-week episode

MEDWAY Adult and Community Learning Service is offering a second playwriting course following the popularity of the first.

The 10-week course costs £57 and starts on Wednesday, April 27, at the adult education centre in Green Street, Gillingham.

Each session will run from 7-9pm.

The course will be taught by Paul Doust, a

professional scriptwriter who has published his own plays and has experience of writing for EastEnders. He will teach students how to choose a story, lay out the script, use surprise and suspense, write character speech, and reveal characters through action.

Call 01634 338429 for more information or to enrol.

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5 April 2011 or 7 June 2011, 9.00 - 12.30pm

INTRODUCTION TO ADD/ADHD

24 April 2011 or 26 May 2011, 9.00 - 12.30pm

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9 March 2011 or 15 June 2011, 9.00 - 12.30pm

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

9 March 2011 or 15 June 2011, 9.00 - 12.30pm

ANXIETY AND MOOD DISORDERS

29 March 2011 or 21 June 2011, 9.00 - 12.30pm

INTRODUCTION TO ASD

12 March 2011 or 17 June 2011, 9.00 - 12.30pm

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22 March 2011 or 17 May 2011, 9.30 - 3.30pm

All courses are delivered at the Training Solutions Business Centre at Manston Park.

For more information, please contact the
Training Solutions Team on **01843 605032**
or email **training.solutions@thanet.ac.uk**



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All candidates must come from an Engineering/Construction background with a proven track record in Quantity Surveying. Applicants must be commercially aware in dealing with subcontract payments, interim monthly accounts, re-measurement, controlling multiple contracts to budgetary requirements and final accounting.

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COUNTY SECRETARY

(Chief Executive Officer)

(£30,851 – £ 35,430)

The Kent Association of Local Councils is recruiting a County Secretary from June 2011, to secure the administration, management and funding for the Association. You will head a small team whose role is to provide quality legal and technical advice, high standard training, the dissemination of new information and the maintenance of regular communication between our office in Folkestone and our almost 300 member Parish and Town Councils. Ideally you will be an enthusiastic professional person, preferably with a background in, or understanding of, Local Government. You will need to have excellent administration and management skills. You will also need good inter-personal and general communication skills, have experience of servicing and leading meetings and be a confident public speaker.

You will need to be flexible and there will be some evening and weekend work.

Closing date: 4th April 2011

**For application form and job description
contact 01303 248252 or email
kalc@btconnect.com**

Co-ordinator

Thanet Kidz Klub

Salary c £20,000 pa + Accommodation + Pension

TKK in partnership with Church Army are seeking to appoint an exceptionally gifted Christian person to plan, organise and deliver a term time Kidz Klub for the area. Included will be responsibility for administration, the budget, fund raising and volunteers.

Additionally the Co-ordinator will have responsibility for developing the work across the churches of Thanet.

Based in The Marlowe Innovation Centre in Ramsgate the Saturday morning Kidz Klub takes place in the adjacent Marlowe Academy along with evening home visiting during the week.

If you are experienced in working with children of primary school age and feel you can take this one year old ecumenical project forward please send your CV with covering letter to:

Mrs G. E. Trumble, Thanet Kidz Klub, The Marlowe Innovation Centre,
Stirling Way, Ramsgate CT12 6NA.

This position is subject to an Enhanced CRB.

Closing date for receipt of applications 20th April. Interviews 28th April.

TKK is in the process of applying for independent charitable status.

Coblans Nurseries Ltd

Seasonal Temporary Nursery Assistants

Based at Tonbridge • £5.93 per hour based on a 40 hour week

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If you feel you have the necessary skills for this position, please send your CV and letter of application to Jo Dury, Coblans Nurseries Ltd, Trench Road, Tonbridge, Kent TN11 9NG or email jo.dury@coblans.co.uk

Closing date: - 4th April 2011

www.coblans.co.uk

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Please apply with your CV and covering letter in the first instance to:

Christine Davidson, Commercial Director
ARCHANT KOS MEDIA,
Apple Barn, Hythe Road,
Smeeth, Ashford, Kent TN25 6SS
Or by email christine.davidson@kosmedia.co.uk

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Please apply in writing with your CV and covering letter in the first instance to:

Ynez Coton, Commercial Director,
ARCHANT KOS MEDIA
Apple Barn, Hythe Rd
Smeeth, Ashford Kent TN25 6SS
Or email ynnez.coton@kosmedia.co.uk

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An experienced Service Advisor is required for our busy Malthouse Reception. Based in Canterbury the successful applicant will be comfortable dealing with customers both face to face and over the telephone and be professional in all that they undertake. It is important that the applicant be a good team player and be experienced at dealing with staff at all levels.

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An experienced Sales Specialist is being sought for our Honda dealership based in Canterbury. We are seeking a professional individual with a proven track record in both sales and customer satisfaction. We are pleased to report that our Honda dealership is achieving well towards our targeted numbers and this additional position will enable us to exceed objective.

Please send your CV to Mrs Lana Farr at:
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Closing date 15th April

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Ashford International Hotel is currently looking for two experienced managers to join our team

Deputy General Manager

£28,000 to £33,000 per annum dependant on experience

As Operations Manager you'll be reporting directly to the General Manager and be taking the reins when they're not around. You'll be responsible for the daily operation of your hotel with a specific focus on food and beverage, conferences and events. Ultimately, it's about growing and developing the operational areas of our business to ensure we achieve our profit targets, so you will also be involved in development of the hotel business strategy and budget, as well as assisting with the forecast on a weekly basis. And because we don't believe in strict corporate guidelines, you'll have freedom to make your own decisions and think up new and creative ways to get results. Previous Hotel Experience is essential for this role

Front of House Manager

£19,000 to £21,000 per annum dependant on experience

As Reception Manager you'll lead, inspire and motivate the Reception team to handle check in and check out to give a great first and last impression making sure that our guests have everything they need to be comfortable and enjoy their stay. Our Reception team thrives on pressure and are nothing if not flexible, welcoming and, quite frankly, amazing at all times! We also know that each and every one of our guests wants to be made to feel special, so no lengthy standards checklists for us! You'll just use your instinct to build a great rapport and deliver our distinctively memorable one of a kind service.

Contact information

If you are interested in applying for this position, please forward your CV and covering letter to **Jemma Wilkins**, HR Manager at jwilkins@qhoteles.co.uk or apply online at www.qhotels.co.uk

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Required for around three days per week. 17th Edition preferred. Must have own tools and transport. Varied work. Rates by experience and negotiation.

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Required for
September 2011



Head of Business Studies and ICT (TLR 1a)

We are looking for a dynamic new leader for our Business Studies and ICT Faculty. The school has invested heavily recently in quality equipment and a VLE. Business is the second specialist subject here and a popular option. The Faculty is linked with Technology and together drive the school's enterprise work. But there is more to do.

Are you:

- A good leader and motivator of both adults and children;
- Able to bring visionary thinking into everyday practice;
- Committed to the highest possible standards of teaching and learning?

We promise:

- A supportive and friendly environment in which to work;
- Recognition of your skills and ideas in the development of the school;
- Good training and career development opportunities;
- New and invigorating challenges.

Closing date for applications: 4pm 6th April 2011
Date of interviews: Week beginning 2nd May 2011

Application forms and information from:
Susan Allison, Meopham School, Wrotham Road,
Meopham, Kent. DA13 0AH
Telephone: 01474 814646 x234
Email: sal@meopham.kent.sch.uk
Visit: www.meopham.kent.sch.uk

All our posts are subject to stringent child protection checks.



Required for
September 2011



Head of Creative Arts (TLR1b)

We are looking for an experienced and dynamic leader for Art, Dance, Drama, Media and Music, from September 2011.

We welcome applications from individuals who can demonstrate a passion for the Arts, and who have a real understanding of how students learn kinaesthetically.. We have gained Artsmark award. There is good informal collaboration between departments through the school's excellent performances and festivals. We are now looking for someone to develop the faculty even further to provide outstanding teaching & learning for the 21st century. We are fortunate in having an innovative Creative Arts department which has recently taken a major role in developing enquiry based learning in the school. Team working is excellent.

This is a perfect opportunity for a dynamic leader who is keen to excite and challenge both pupils and staff in the pursuit of excellence on the next stage of our journey.

Closing date for applications: 4pm 6th April 2011
Date of interviews: Week beginning 2nd May 2011

Application forms and information from:
Susan Allison, Personnel Officer, Meopham School,
Wrotham Road, Meopham, Kent. DA13 0AH
Telephone: 01474 814646 x234
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Please see our website www.mhffederation.co.uk for full job description, person specification and application form. To discuss the role contact Sue Ricketts on 01732 840995

Closing date: 12.00 noon on Monday 4 April
Interviews v/c: 4 April

MHF is committed to the safeguarding of all young people and this post will be subject to an enhanced CRB and CV check

To advertise in this section 01303 817040

**JobsforKent.co.uk****Information Tech,
Internet, Telecoms****Office & IT Manager****Ashford****Salary** £23,000- £25,000

Office & IT Manager

We are seeking a highly-organised and self-motivated Office and IT Manager to run our busy grant-making office. Kent Community Foundation is an energetic and ambitious charity that supports hundreds of voluntary and community organisations across Kent and Medway. So if you want to make a difference to your local community, this could be the job for you. We are looking for someone with a logical and systematic approach as well as a passion for technology and new media who can lead on our IT strategy. You will have a positive, can-do approach working as part of a small hard-working and enthusiastic team, with excellent communication and customer service skills. To find out more about this role, please email admin@kentcf.org.uk or phone 01303 814 500. Salary: £23,000-£25,000 Full-time. Permanent.

To apply/more information:

Kent Community Foundation

Senior Positions**Development and
Marketing Officer****Ashford****Salary** c. £21,000- £23,000

Development and Marketing Officer. We are seeking a self-motivated Development and Marketing Officer to support the growth and expansion of Kent Community Foundation. We are an energetic and ambitious charity that supports hundreds of voluntary and community organisations across Kent and Medway. So if you want to make a difference to your local community, this could be the job for you. We are looking for someone with a successful track record in a business development role. Charity fundraising experience would be helpful but not essential. What is most important is excellent communication and relationship-building skills. You will have a positive, can-do approach working as part of a small hard-working and enthusiastic team, with excellent customer service skills. To find out more about this role, please email admin@kentcf.org.uk or phone 01303 814 500. Salary: c. £21,000-£23,000. Full-time. Permanent.

To apply/more information:

Kent Community Foundation

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Celebrating 130 years in the print industry, Headley Brothers Ltd is currently looking to recruit an Estimator. Working within the Commercial team and handling a range of print projects, as Estimator you would be responsible for: Producing accurate estimates, tenders and costings; obtaining pricing from internal sources and suppliers; and preparing price matrices. Liaising with staff, suppliers and customers, to ensure provision of the best possible production alternatives and solutions to client requests. Supporting the Commercial Manager in ensuring the commercial success of the company. The ideal candidate will be self-motivated, highly-driven and dynamic. Have excellent organisational skills. Be a strong team player, with excellent interpersonal skills. Have strong oral, numerical and written communication skills. Estimating experience and/or a knowledge of the print industry would be considered useful, but not essential. Headley Brothers Limited is an Investor in People and an equal opportunities employer. Please send your CV to Paul Palmer, Headley Brothers Ltd, The Invicta Press, Queens Road, Ashford, Kent TN24 8HH, or by email to: paul.palmer@headley.co.uk. All applications should include reference number: KOS01. Closing date: Friday 15th April 2011. Please note that responses will only be issued to applicants that are eligible for interview.

To apply/more information:

Headley Brothers Limited

andy.owden@headley.co.uk

Quoting Job Ref: kos01

Required for
September 2011

Full time Female Teacher of PE

Meopham is a very successful specialist sports college. This is an opportunity for someone to get experience in a high-performing PE team. We are looking for someone who has potential to lead and innovate in this next phase of our plans.

Closing date for applications: 4pm 6th April 2011**Date of interviews: Week beginning 2nd May 2011**

Application forms and information from:
Susan Allison, Personnel Officer, Meopham School,
Wrotham Road, Meopham, Kent. DA13 0AH
Telephone: 01474 814646 x234
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*Salary scale: £29,413 - £34,817 for 37 hours per week all year**Interview date: Monday 9 May 2011*

For further details and to apply online please visit our website www.thanet.ac.uk and click on 'About us' and then 'Vacancies'. Alternatively contact the HR office, Thanet College, Ramsgate Road, Broadstairs, Kent, CT10 1PN or telephone our application line for an application pack on (01843) 605052

*Closing date for both posts: Wednesday 13 April 2011***Promoting Equality Preventing Discrimination****THE SPENCER WING**

The Spencer Wing is the independently owned and managed 22 bed private hospital situated on the QEOM Hospital site.

We also have a 4 bed unit at the William Harvey Hospital in Ashford.

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Full and Part - time position available**Closing date for applications - Monday 11th April 2011****Qualifications****Registered Nurse 1st Level****Evidence of continual professional development**

To discuss these opportunities or to arrange an informal visit, please contact
Sue Bowe - Outpatient Sister or Carolyn Flegg - Staff Nurse, on 01843 234555 Ext: 63425

For job description and application form please contact:

**Jo Edwards, East Kent Medical Services Ltd, The Spencer Wing,
QEOM Hospital, Ramsgate Road, Margate, Kent CT19 4BG**

Telephone: 01843 234556 Fax: 01843 296333**E-mail: jo.edwards@thespencerwing.com**

The Spencer Wing is an equal opportunity employer



These positions are subject to a Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure check

**Westlands Academies Trust****THE WESTLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Westlands Avenue, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 1PF

Site Maintenance Technician/Caretaker

37 hours a week from 11am – 7pm Mondays-Friday**Kent Pay Band 3 - £14,099 - £15,984**

Extra payments will be made to cover any out-of-hours lettings during evenings and weekends and for weekend/Bank Holiday standby duty, all of which are carried out on a mandatory, shared rota basis. Applicants must be prepared to work a variety of hours, should the need arise.

The successful applicant will work as a member of the Site Maintenance team. As well as general caretaking duties they will be expected to undertake site maintenance, and so a good working knowledge and experience with carpentry, electrics, plumbing and decorating is essential. An awareness of swimming pool maintenance would be an advantage.

You are welcome to contact the school for a preliminary discussion if desired.

Recruitment packs are available from the school or online. Please note, we cannot accept CVs without an application form.

Closing date: 6 April 2011 Interviews: 8 April 2011

Westlands Academies Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post is subject to an enhanced CRB check.

Tel: 01795 470862 Fax: 01795 477886

Email: swa@westlands.kent.sch.uk**Executive Headteacher: Mr J Whitcombe MA**

Westlands Academies Trust Holmewood Avenue

Sittingbourne Kent ME10 1XN

Company No 7344732

Required for
September 2011

Head of Agricultural Studies TLR2

This is an exciting new post and a great opportunity for promotion for someone who already has experience of teaching aspects of land-based and environmental sciences and has the background to run and develop our School Farm. You will need to send for the details to really understand this unusual post but, in brief:

- Teach a BTEC qualification in KS4 and Sixth Form
- Teach practical, land-based modules in KS3 science
- Manage the farm and the stock people
- Manage an extensive extra-curricular programme through the Young Farmers Club network
- Lead the development of our farm rebuild

Closing date for applications: 4pm 28th April 2011**Date of interviews: Week beginning 9th May 2011**

Application forms and information from:
Susan Allison, Personnel Officer, Meopham School,
Wrotham Road, Meopham, Kent. DA13 0AH
Telephone: 01474 814646 x234
Email: sal@meopham.kent.sch.uk
Visit: www.meopham.kent.sch.uk

All our posts are subject to stringent child protection checks



Sir Joseph Williamson's Mathematical School

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We require a full time

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37 hours per week, term time only, to start in May 2011.

Salary will be according to age and experience and will be paid at
Medway Grade D2 – Salary range £15,039 - £19,126 pro rata.

Would you be able to liaise with parents, teachers and other professionals in
support of individuals?

Would you be interested in developing your skills with classes of young
people?

If so, please contact Mrs J Harrison, Headteacher's PA, for an application
form and job specification on 01634 844008.

Any offer of employment will be subject to a satisfactory Enhanced
Criminal Records Bureau check

Closing date for applications – Wednesday, 6th April 2011



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PREMISES LICENSE

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that Lal Ram of 57 St Peters Street, Canterbury Kent CT1 2BE has applied to Canterbury City Council for the grant an Off-License (Provision of Alcohol. Standard hours: Monday – Saturday 06:00 – 22:00, Sunday 07:00 – 22:00. No alcohol to be consumed on the premises for the premises Binnewith News situated at 57 St Peters Street, Canterbury Kent CT1 2BE.

All representations to this application must be in writing and delivered to the Licensing team, Canterbury City Council, Military Road, Canterbury, CT1 1YW. It must not be delivered to any other council premises.

A register of licensing applications can be inspected at <http://www.canterbury.gov.uk/licensing> or at Council Offices, Military Road, Canterbury, Kent CT1 1YW Tel. 01227 862000 by appointment with the Licensing Team between 10am and 4pm Monday to Friday. Any person wishing to submit representations to my/our application must give notice in writing to the address shown above, giving in detail the grounds of objection by 28th April 2011.

The Council will not entertain representations where the writer requests that his identity remains anonymous. Copies of all representation will be included in the papers presented to the Licensing Panel and will therefore pass into the public domain. Representations must relate to one of the four Licensing Objectives: the prevention of crime and disorder, public safety, the prevention of public nuisance and the protection of children from harm. In the case of an application for a provisional statement, please note that representations will be restricted once a statement has been issued.

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE



Property Address: 9
Kenwood Avenue,
Lordswood, Chatham, Kent,
ME5 8HS

Notice of Offer

By order of the mortgagees in possession, we would advise that an offer has been made for the above property in the sum of £135,000. Any person wishing to increase on this offer should notify the selling agents of their best offer to be made either prior to exchange of contracts or within the next 7 days which ever is sooner.

Agent Contact Details:
Mann Countrywide, 126
High Street, Chatham, Kent,
ME4 4BY

Tel.No: 01634 843277

PLANNING

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE) (ENGLAND) ORDER 2010 NOTICE UNDER ARTICLE 13

**KCC/DO/0100/2011 - Proposed development at
4 locations in Dover, rear car park at 1-10 Brookfield Place, CT16 2AE,
2 St Radigunds Road, CT17 0JX,
1-10 Maison Dieu Road car park, CT16 1RN, and Buckland Mill Development,
Crabble Hill, CT17 0RZ.**

Southern Water Limited is applying to Kent County Council for planning permission for kiosks and vents at three locations in Dover in support of flood alleviation sewer improvements supported by one temporary contractor's compound on vacant land at Crabble Hill, Dover.

You may view this application at Dover District Council, Council Offices, White Cliffs Business Park, Dover, Kent, CT16 3PJ or at our offices at the address below during all reasonable office hours. Alternatively, details of the application can be viewed on Kent County Council's website at www.kent.gov.uk/planning.

**KCC/MA/0109/2011 - Proposed development at Leeds Wastewater
Treatment Works, Penfold Hill, Leeds, Maidstone, Kent, ME17 1RR.**

Southern Water Limited is applying to Kent County Council for planning permission for construction of a Motor Control Centre Kiosk and a ferric dosing package plant Kiosk at Leeds Wastewater Treatment Works (WTV).

You may view this application at Maidstone Borough Council, The Gateway Reception, King Street, Maidstone, Kent, ME15 6JQ or at our offices at the address below during all reasonable office hours. Alternatively, details of the application can be viewed on Kent County Council's website at www.kent.gov.uk/planning.

**KCC/TW/0121/2011 - Proposed development at Langton Green Primary
School, Lampington Row, Langton Green, Tunbridge Wells
Kent, TN3 0JG.**

Kent County Council Children, Families and Education is applying to Kent County Council for planning permission for the placement of one, six bay modular building. The proposed development does not accord with the provisions of the development plan in force in the area in which the land to which the application relates is situated, as it is within the Metropolitan Green Belt.

You may view this application at Tunbridge Wells Borough Council Gateway, 8 Grosvenor Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN1 2AB or at our offices at the address below during all reasonable office hours. Alternatively, details of the application can be viewed on Kent County Council's website at www.kent.gov.uk/planning.

NOTICE UNDER ARTICLE 13 OF THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE) (ENGLAND) ORDER 2010 AND UNDER THE PLANNING (LISTED BUILDING AND CONSERVATION AREAS) ACT 1990

**KCC/CA/0045/2011 - Proposed development at Chislet CEP School,
Church Lane, Chislet, Canterbury, Kent, CT3 4DU.**

Kent County Council Property Group is applying to Kent County Council Planning Applications Group for the proposed demolition of existing single storey flat roofed rear extension and replacement with a larger single storey extension to incorporate a care suite and storage area. The proposed development is within a Conservation Area and may affect its character and/or appearance.

You may view this application at Canterbury City Council Offices, Military Road, Canterbury, Kent, CT1 1YW or at our offices at the address below during all reasonable office hours. Alternatively, details of the application can be viewed on Kent County Council's website at www.kent.gov.uk/planning.

**KCC/TW/0119/2011 - Proposed development at Speldhurst CE Primary
School, Langton Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN3 0NP.**

The Trustees of the School House Trust are applying to Kent County Council for planning permission for the provision of an early years canopy. The proposed development is adjacent to a Conservation Area and could affect its character and/or appearance. The proposed development affects a Listed Building.

You may view this application at Tunbridge Wells Borough Council Gateway, 8 Grosvenor Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN1 2AB or at our offices at the address below during all reasonable office hours. Alternatively, details of the application can be viewed on Kent County Council's website at www.kent.gov.uk/planning.

We accept comments online via our website, by email to planning.applications@kent.gov.uk or in writing to Planning Applications Group, Kent County Council, First Floor, Invicta House, County Hall, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1XX within 21 days from the date of this notice. Please quote the application reference number and note that comments may be drawn to the attention of Council Members, the applicant and other interested persons.

Sharon Thompson
Head of Planning Applications Group
Kent County Council
Dated: 3 April 2011



Town and Country Planning Acts

The Council is required to give notice of the following applications

11/00682/HOUSE Scribbins Walkhurst Road, Benenden
- New garage (amendment to TW/10/02525/FUL) (LB)

11/00754/FUL OS Plot 6287 Iden Green Road, Benenden
- Provision of 5 No. dwellings for Local Needs Affordable Housing including associated access, hard and soft landscaping (CA) (LB) (PROV)

11/00753/LBC Portobello Holly Bank, Brencley
- Listed Building Consent: Paint front and north elevations to match existing (LB)

11/00785/HOUSE Farm Oast Smugley Farm, Goudhurst
- New external covered porch to entrance of converted oasthouse; Replacement of internal stairs and remodelling of internal accommodation of studio outbuilding; New door in lieu of existing window to south west elevation, new double height window in lieu of existing French doors and first floor window; New external door to boiler cupboard to south east elevation; New velux rooflights (LB)

11/00813/LBC Meadow View Jarvis Lane, Goudhurst
- Listed Building Consent: Refurbishment of pair of listed cottages to include repairs to roof with replacements of sections of gutter and tiles; installation of oil fired boilers; replacement kitchens and bathrooms; replacement of all windows (LB)

11/00841/HOUSE 1 Hunts Lane Goudhurst, Goudhurst
- Refurbishment and two storey side extension (CA) (LB)

11/00845/LBC 1 Hunts Lane Goudhurst, Goudhurst
- Listed Building Consent: Refurbishment and two storey side extension (LB)

11/00606/LBC 2 Roses Farm Cranbrook Road, Hawkhurst
- Listed Building Consent - Create internal doorway at site of sealed window; Replace and splice decayed timber; Upgrade internal walls of the outhouse; Replace existing modern timbers with reclaimed revealed oak studs, horsehair and lime plaster between selected lathes; Repair secondary chimney stack (LB)

11/00710/HOUSE Weald House Ockley Road, Hawkhurst
- Reinstatement of fire damaged building and increase in height of eaves (LB) (CA)

11/00820/HOUSE Yew Tree Hall House Yew Tree Green Road, Horsmonden
- Rear dormer (LB)

11/00825/LBC Yew Tree Hall House Yew Tree Green Road, Horsmonden
- Listed Building Consent: Rear dormer (LB)

11/00706/LBC 4 Bedford Terrace Royal Tunbridge Wells, Pantiles & St Marks
- Listed Building Consent: Internal refurbishment, installation of a discreet cornice to the hallway and principle rooms. Replacement of two fireplaces which have been removed and blocking up of archway in the basement. The removal of white tiles put on the front basement wall in the 70s (LB)

11/00759/LBC 4 Bedford Terrace Royal Tunbridge Wells, Pantiles & St Marks
- Listed Building Consent - Rewire property, repair and replace damp course, replace leaking central heating and rainwater pipes and extend waste water pipe to new bathroom location (LB)

11/00851/LBC Stanton House Romford Road, Pembury
- Listed Building Consent - Addition of two solar panels (LB)

11/00681/HOUSE The Lodge Pembury Road, Sherwood
- Single-storey extension (CA)

11/00683/HOUSE Snowdrop House Speldhurst Road, Speldhurst
- Conservatory to rear elevation (CA)

11/00844/HOUSE The Glebe House Langton Road, Speldhurst
- Removal and replacement of the existing external first floor vertical tiling to three elevations (LB) (CA)

(DEVPLN) Departure from the Development Plan (PROV) Affecting A Public Right of Way (CA) Affecting a Conservation Area (LB) Affecting a Listed Building (MAJOR) Major Applications (MAST) Mast Applications (EIA) Applications Accompanied by an EIA Statement.

You may view these applications on our website (www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk), at the The Old Fire Station, Stone Street, Cranbrook or at Gateway, 8 Grosvenor Road, Tunbridge Wells. We accept comments online, by email to planningcomments@tunbridgewells.gov.uk or in writing to the address below. Comments should be made within 21 days from the date of this notice, although we may accept them after this date.

You should quote the reference and be aware that we make all comments available for inspection, placing them on the file and publishing them on the internet. We do not publish signatures, telephone numbers or email addresses on the internet.

Jim Kehoe
Head of Planning Services
Town Hall Royal Tunbridge Wells TN1 1RS

Dated: 2 April 2011



COMERCIAL NOTICE



Adoption Notice Sexual Entertainment Venues Licensing of Sexual Entertainment Venues

Notice is hereby given that on the 2nd March 2011 Maidstone Borough Council passed a Resolution in exercise of their powers under Part 2 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982, to adopt Schedule 3 of the Act as amended by Section 27 of the Policing and Crime Act 2009 for the licensing of Sexual Entertainment Venues. The resolution will come into force on the 1st May 2011.

The effect of this resolution is that sexual entertainment venues that provide 'relevant entertainment' as defined under the Act will need to be licensed by Maidstone Borough Council unless the requirement for a licence has been waived. There will be an opportunity for members of the public and enforcement agencies to object to the grant, renewal and transfer of licences and licences may be granted, granted with conditions or refused.

HIGHWAYS

HIGHWAYS – Borough of Tonbridge & Malling

(WILLOW WENTS, MEREWORTH) (PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

NOTICE is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on Willow Wents Mereworth, between Horns Lane and New Pound Lane on or after Monday 18th April 2011 for a period of up to 5 days or until such works are complete.

The alternative route is via New Pound Lane, Beech Road and Horns Lane and vice versa.

UK power Networks apologise for any inconvenience caused by these essential works that are necessary to fit a new electrical supply. Should you require any further information about these works, their contact is Jenny Hayes on 07836 297415.

KATHERINE KERSWELL
Group Managing Director
Kent County Council
County Hall, Maidstone Kent ME14 2XQ

For further information please
contact Kent Highway Services
on 08458 247 800
(local rate) or visit
www.kent.gov.uk/highways



To place your notice here call the Kent Public Notice team
on

01303 817044

HIGHWAYS

HIGHWAYS - District of Ashford

BROMLEY GREEN ROAD, RUCKINGE (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Because of water mains replacement works, Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting through traffic on Bromley Green Road, Ruckinge, on or after 4 April 2011 for up to 5 weeks or until the works have been completed.

The road will be closed in rolling sections between the junctions with Capel Road and Hornash Lane.

The alternative route is via Capel Road and Hamstreet Road.

VARIOUS ROADS, ASHFORD (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting through traffic on Various Roads, Ashford, as part of a programme of highway repairs and resurfacing.

The Order takes effect on or after 4 April 2011 for up to 3 months or until the works have been completed.

The roads affected, dates of closure and alternative routes are as shown below. Where roads are closed for several days, the closures are planned for weekdays but some weekend working may be involved to catch up dates missed. Where roads are closed twice, the initial closure is 1 day for Surfacing and then a further 1 day for sweeping and lining.

WYE ROAD, WYE / FOLLY TOWN, WYE / THE STREET, HASTINGLEIGH -
from Amage Road, Wye

Between 7 April and 18 April 2011
Alternative route via Scotton Street, High Street, Churchfield Way, Bramble Lane, A28 Canterbury Road, Ashford Road, White Hill, Shalmsford Street, The Downs, Chartham Downs Road, B2o68 Faussett Hill, Stone Street, Thorne Lane, Dean Hill and Elvington Park

CHURCH LANE / LONGROPE, SHADOXHURST
from Woodchurch Road to Birchett Lane
Between 14 April and 19 April 2011
Alternative route via Woodchurch Road, Hornash Lane, Hamstreet Road and Birchett Lane

PLURENDEN ROAD, WOODCHURCH – between Shadoxhurst Road and Bethersden Road
Between 15 April and 21 April 2011
Alternative route via Shadoxhurst Road, Redbrook Street and Bethersden Road

MAYTHAM ROAD, ROLVENDEN between Frogs Lane and Wittersham Rd Railway Station
Between 19 April and 5 May 2011
Alternative route via A28 High Street, Tenterden Road, Rolvenden Hill, Rolvenden Road, Small Hythe Road and Wittersham Road

GIGGERS GREEN ROAD, ALDINGTON
Surfacing on 10 May 2011 (1 day) then sweeping & lining on 17 May 2011 (1 day)
Alternative route via B2o67 Knoll Hill, Roman Road, Aldington Road, Lympe Hill, West Hythe Road and Lower Wall Road

ASHFORD ROAD, BILSINGTON – from Bilsington Crossroads to Frith Road
Surfacing on 16 May 2011 (1 day) then sweeping & lining on 23 May 2011 (1 day)
Alternative route via Frith Road, Bank Road, Forge Hill, New Road Hill and B2o67 Bilsington Road

CAGE LANE, SMARDEN – from Beult Meadow to Biddenden Road
Surfacing on 18 May 2011 (1 day) then sweeping & lining on 25 May 2011 (1 day)
Water Lane, Bell Lane, Burnthouse Lane and Biddenden Rd

IDEN LANE, EGERTON - for entire length
Between 20 June and 23 June 2011
There is no alternative route as it is a No Through Road. Every effort will be made to maintain access whenever it is safe to do so

The works are weather dependant and may be affected by adverse conditions and operational changes. Works that are missed will be deferred until later in the programme with the revised dates signposted on site.

HIGHWAYS - District of Cantebury

CHURCH LANE, KINGSTON, CANTERBURY (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Because of ducting works for BT Openreach, Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting through traffic on Church Lane, Kingston, Canterbury, on or after 18 April 2011 for up to 4 days or until the works have been completed.

The road will be closed outside numbers 1-2 Church Lane.

The alternative route is via The Street, Valley Road, Covet Lane, Black Robin Lane and Church Lane.

MORTIMER STREET AND NORTH STREET, HERNE BAY (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Because of water mains replacement works, Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting through traffic on Mortimer Street, Herne Bay, on or after 4 April 2011 for up to 3 weeks or until the works have been completed.

Mortimer Street will be closed between the junctions with North Street and East Street.

The alternative route is via North Street, High Street and East Street.

North Street will become One-way, southbound only, between the junctions with Charles Street and Mortimer Street.

The alternative route for northbound traffic is via High Street, East Street, Charles Street and North Street.

Chapel Street will be closed between the car park entrance and the junction with Mortimer Street, and can be accessed via Charles Street and North Street.

POUND LANE, CANTERBURY (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Because of ducting works on behalf of BT Openreach, Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting through traffic on Pound Lane, Canterbury, on or after 18 April 2011 for up to 4 days or until the works have been completed.

The road will be closed between the junction with St Dunstan's Street and the entrance to Pound Lane Car Park.

Access for local residents and businesses will be maintained up to the point of closure, whenever it is safe to do so.

The alternative route is via North Lane, The Causeway and Pound Lane.

THE STREET, KINGSTON (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Because of BT underground cabling works, Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting through traffic on The Street, Kingston, on or after 4 April 2011 for up to 4 days or until the works have been completed.

It is planned the works will be carried out off peak between 9.30 am and 4.00 pm with the road re-opened outside these hours.

The road will be closed outside 52-56 The Street. There will be no access for through traffic between the junctions with Church Lane and Marley Lane / Westwood Road.

The alternative route is via Bonny Bush Hill, Black Robin Lane, Covet Lane, Turks Hill, Westwood Road and The Street.

WINGHAM LANE, ICKHAM, CANTERBURY (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

To enable ducting works to be carried out on behalf of BT Openreach, Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting through traffic on Wingham Lane (also known as Wingham Road), Ickham, Canterbury, on or after 18 April 2011 for up to 2 days or until the works have been completed.

The road will be closed between the junctions with School Lane and Bay Lane.

The alternative routes are
Westbound via Wingham Lane, A257 Canterbury Road, Cherville lane and School Lane
Eastbound via Wickham Road, Nargate Street, A257 Wingham Road, Canterbury Road and Wingham Lane.

HIGHWAYS - Borough of Dartford

CHURCH HILL, STONE - (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011
THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst works are carried out on or near the highway the Kent County Council has made an Order restricting the use by vehicular traffic on Church Hill, Stone adjacent to level crossing.

The Order will become effective on 4th April 2011, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months; the works are planned to last 2 weeks. These restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the above restriction will be via: Crossways Boulevard and Cotton Lane

The purpose of the closure is to facilitate Network Rail engineering works.

HIGHWAYS - District of Dover

MONGEHAM ROAD, GREAT MONGEHAM (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Because of gully repairs and carriageway resurfacing, Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting through traffic on Mongeham Road, Great Mongeham, on or after 18 April 2011 for up to 5 days or until the works have been completed.

The road will be closed between the junctions with St Richard's Road and Northbourne Road.

The alternative route is via St Richard's Road, Cross Road, Ellens Road, Ellens Hill and Mongeham Road.

VICARAGE LANE, NONINGTON (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Because of carriageway repairs and resurfacing, Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting through traffic on Vicarage Lane, Nonington, on or after 19 April 2011 for up to 3 days or until the works have been completed.

The road will be closed between the junctions with Easole Street and Church Street.

The alternative route is via Holt Street, Butter Street and Church Street.

HIGHWAYS - Borough of Maidstone

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL (TOWER LANE, BEARSTED) (PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

NOTICE is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out on or near a road the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on Tower Lane from Roseacre Lane for 110m in a westerly direction on or after Tuesday 19th April 2011 for a period of up to 2 weeks or until such works are completed.

The alternative route is via Yeoman Lane, A2o Ashford Road, Roseacre Lane.

BT Openreach apologise for any inconvenience caused by these works, which are necessary for cabling works. Should you require any further information for these works, please contact Louise Skull on 0870 0500792.

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL (VARIOUS ROADS, MAIDSTONE, TONBRIDGE & MALLING, DARTFORD, GRAVESHAM, SEVENOAKS) (50MPH SPEED RESTRICTION) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011
THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY HE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

NOTICE is hereby given that because of the likelihood of danger to the public using a road the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting the use by vehicular traffic travelling at any speed greater than 50mph on the routes described in the Schedule.

The Order will become effective on Monday 4th April 2011, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months.

Schedule

Road Name:	A2o6 Bob Dunn Way, Dartford
Extent:	From the A282 to the roundabout with the A2o26 Burnham Road
Dates:	Start: 4th April 2011 End: 7th April 2011
Dates:	Start: 8th August 2011 End: 11th August 2011

Road Name:	A289 Hasted Road, Gravesend (Wainscott Bypass)
Extent:	From M2 junction 1 to the Dillywood Lane Bridge
Dates:	Start: 8th April 2011 End: 15th April 2011
Dates:	Start: 12th August 2011 End: 19th August 2011

Road Name:	A2o18 Shepherd Lane, Dartford
Extent:	From the roundabout of the A2 to the existing 40mph speed limit 100m before the roundabout with Rochester Way
Dates:	Start: 28th April 2011 End: 28th April 2011
Dates:	Start: 31st August 2011 End: 31st August 2011

For further information, please contact
Kent Highway Services, on 08458 247 800
(local rate) or visit www.kent.gov.uk/highways



Road Name:	A229 Bluebell Hill
Extent:	From the existing 50mph speed limit 30m Maidstone side of the Cobtree Manor Park entrance to the existing 50mph speed restriction 1/4mile from the M2 junction 3
Dates:	Start: 3rd May 2011 End: 10th May 2011
Dates:	Start: 1st September 2011 End: 8th September 2011

Road Name:	A249 Detling Hill M2 to Bearsted Road, Maidstone
Extent:	From the roundabout with Bearsted Road (Newnham Court Farm) to existing 50mph speed limit 250m Detling side of Harple Lane
	From existing 50mph speed limit 40m Detling side of Osbourne Drive
Dates:	Start: 11th May 2011 End: 18th May 2011
Dates:	Start: 9th September 2011 End: 16th September 2011

Road Name:	A2o Ashford Road, Maidstone
Extent:	From Old Mill Road to 50m Ashford side of the roundabout with the B2163 Penfold Hill
Dates:	Start: 19th May 2011 End: 19th May 2011
Dates:	Start: 19th September 2011 End: 19th September 2011

Road Name:	A2o Coldharbour Lane, Maidstone
Extent:	From the roundabout of the M2o junction 5 to the roundabout of the A2o London Road
	From the A2o London Road to the roundabout with St Laurence Road
Dates:	Start: 19th May 2011 End: 19th May 2011
Dates:	Start: 19th September 2011 End: 19th September 2011

Road Name:	A228 Snodland Bypass
Extent:	From outside Whittings Farm to the existing 40mph outside the Water Treatment works
Dates:	Start: 5th July 2011 End: 6th July 2011
Dates:	Start: 20th September 2011 End: 21st September 2011

Road Name:	A228 Hale Street Bypass
Extent:	From the roundabout with the B2o15 to the roundabout with the B216o Maidstone Road
Dates:	Start: 14th July 2011 End: 15th July 2011
Dates:	Start: 29th September 2011 End: 30th September 2011

Road Name:	A25 Sevenoaks Road, Ightham
Extent:	From junction with Rectory Lane to the junction of Pilar Box Lane
Dates:	Start: 19th July 2011 End: 19th July 2011
Dates:	Start: 4th October 2011 End: 4th October 2011

Road Name:	A25 Ightham Bypass, Ightham
Extent:	From the junction of Rectory Lane to the junction of Borough Green Road
Dates:	Start: 19th July 2011 End: 19th July 2011
Dates:	Start: 4th October 2011 End: 4th October 2011

Kent Highway Services apologise for any inconvenience caused by these essential works, which are necessary for carriageway maintenance works. Should you require any further information about these works, the contact is Steve Bradley of Ringway Infrastructure Services Ltd on 08458 247 800.

HIGHWAYS - District of Sevenoaks

DEVON ROAD, SOUTH DARENTH - (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011
THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst works are carried out on or near the highway the Kent County Council has made an Order restricting the use by vehicular traffic on Devon Road, South Darenth between Cedar Drive and Water Mill.

The Order will become effective on 4th April 2011, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months; the works are planned to last 4 weeks. These restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the above restriction will be via: Devon Road, Cedar Drive, A225 Main Road, station Road Horton Kirby, Horton Road, Holmesdale Road and Devon Road.

The purpose of the closure is to facilitate installation of a new footway across a river culvert.

HIGHWAYS

MAIN ROAD, KNOCKHOLT - (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst works are carried out on or near the highway the Kent County Council intends to make an Order restricting the use by vehicular traffic on Main Road, Knockholt between Brasted Lane and Stoneings Lane.

The Order will become effective on 18th April 2011, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months; the works are planned to commence 24th April 2011 and last 1 week. These restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the above restriction will be via: Southbound: Brasted Lane and Stoneings Lane Northbound: Main Road, Shelleys Lane and Burlings Lane

The purpose of the closure is to facilitate BT works.

RECTORY LANE, HEVER - (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst works are carried out on or near the highway the Kent County Council has made an Order restricting the use by vehicular traffic on Rectory Lane, Hever from its junctions with Uckfield Lane and Pigdown Lane.

The Order will become effective on 4th April 2011, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months; the works are planned to commence 6th April 2011 and last 6 months. These restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the above restriction will be via: Uckfield Lane and Pigdown Lane.

The purpose of the closure is to facilitate installation of replacement water main and lateral services.

STATION APPROACH, SWANLEY - (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst works are carried out on or near the highway the Kent County Council has made an Order restricting the use by vehicular traffic on Station Approach, Swanley from Goldsel Road for 60m.

The Order will become effective on 4th April 2011, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months; the works are planned to commence 8th April 2011 and last 3 days; 15th April 2011 and last 3 days; 6th May 2011 and last 2 days and 22nd July 2011 and last 2 days. These restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the above restriction will be via: Goldsel Road, Azalea Drive and Station Approach.

The purpose of the closure is to facilitate a mobile crane on the highway for Network Rail works.

HIGHWAYS - District of Shepway

VARIOUS ROADS, SHEPWAY (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Because of a programme of carriageway repairs and resurfacing, Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting through traffic on Various Roads, Shepway, on or after 20 April 2011 for up to 3 months or until the works have been completed.

The roads affected, dates of closure and alternative routes are as shown below.

CINQUE PORTS AVENUE for its entire length
Between 20 April and 28 April 2011
Alternative route via St Leonard's Road.
There will be a suspension of the One-way Traffic Order *whilst the road is closed between the junctions with St Leonard's Road and Wakefield Way*, to allow access, when the relevant signs are covered or removed.

COAST DRIVE / THE PARADE, LYDD-ON-SEA
Between 21 April and 13 May 2011
Alternative route via Battery Road, Dungeness Road, Harden Road, Station Road, B2075 Romney Road, A259 Lydd Road, High Street, B2071 Station Road, Littlestone Road, Marine Parade, Grand Parade and Coast Drive.

CRETE ROAD WEST, FOLKESTONE between the junctions with A260 Canterbury Road and Danton Lane.
Surfacing - 7 & 8 May 2011 then sweeping and lining on 15 May 2011
Alternative route via A260 Canterbury Road, Spitfire Way, Aerodrome Road, Paddlesworth Lane and Upper Arpinge.

HOAD ROAD, SWINGFIELD from junction with Forge Hill to junction of (A260) Canterbury Road
Surfacing on 8 May 2011 then sweeping & lining on 15 May 2011
Alternative route via Forge Hill, Oak Hill and A260 Canterbury Road

UPPER ARPINGE, PADDLESWORTH – from the junction with Teddars Leas Road
Surfacing on 8 May 2011 then sweeping and lining on 15 May 2011
Alternative route via Teddars Leas Road

GREEN LANE, ELHAM for its entire length
Surfacing on 8 & 9 May 2011 then sweeping and lining on 16 May 2011
Alternative route via North Elham Hill and Standard Hill Top

NORWOOD LANE, NEWCHURCH from junction with Newchurch Lane to its junction with Chittenden Lane
Surfacing on 10 & 11 May 2011 then sweeping and lining on 18 May 2011
Alternative route via Newchurch Lane, Ashford Road, unnamed road from Ashford Road to Turnagate Cottage, Chittenden Lane

NEWCHURCH ROAD, IVYCHURCH between the junctions with Ashford Road and Mill Bank.
Surfacing on 11 May 2011 then sweeping and lining on 18 May 2011
Alternative route via Ashford Road, A2070 Ashford Road, Marsh Road, Cock Lane, B2067 Ruckinge Road, B2067 Hamstreet Road and Newchurch Road

CANTERBURY ROAD, ELHAM from junction with Park Lane to 50 metres north east of White Horse Lane
Surfacing - 12 May 2011 then sweeping and lining on 19 May 2011

Alternative route via High Street Elham, New Road, Canterbury Road, Broad Street, Station Road, Canterbury Road, Beachborough, A20 Ashford Road, B2068 Stanford By-pass, Stone Street, Street End, Faussett Hill, Nackington Road, Old Dover Road, A2050 New Dover Road, A2 Dover Road, Bourne Park Slip Road, Coldharbour Lane, Bonny Bush Hill, Black Robin Lane, Valley Road, Derringtonstone Hill and Elham Valley Road.

BOTOLPH'S BRIDGE ROAD, HYTHE between the junctions with A259 Dymchurch Road and Lower Wall Road
Surfacing on 13 May 2011 then sweeping and lining on 20 May 2011
Alternative route via A259 Dymchurch Road, Burmarsh Road and Lower Wall Road.

BURMARSH ROAD, DYMCHURCH between the junctions with A259 Dymchurch Road and Lower Wall Road.
Surfacing on 13 May 2011 then sweeping and lining on 20 May 2011
Alternative route via A259 Dymchurch Road, Botolph's Bridge Road and Lower Wall Road.

JEFFERSTONE LANE, ST MARY'S BAY from the junction with St Mary's Road to the 30/national speed limit sign
Surfacing on 16 May 2011 then sweeping and lining on 23 May 2011
Alternative route via St Mary's Road and A259 Dymchurch Road

ASHFORD ROAD, IVYCHURCH between Five Vents Lane and A2070 Ashford Road
Surfacing on 17 May 2011 then sweeping and lining on 24 May 2011
Alternative route via Ashford Road, A259 Lydd Road, Rhee Wall, A2070 Ashford Road

The works are weather dependant and may be delayed by adverse conditions. Works that are missed will be deferred until later in the programme with the revised dates signposted on site.

HIGHWAYS - District of Swale

CLAXFIELD ROAD, TEYNHAM (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Because of duct installation works for BT, Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting through traffic on Claxfield Road, Teynham, on or after 4 April 2011 for up to 2 weeks or until the works have been completed.
The road will be closed outside Claxfield Farm.

The alternative route is via A2 London Road, Lynsted Lane and Claxfield Road.

VARIOUS ROADS, FAVERSHAM (ONE-WAY TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Because of water mains replacement works, Kent County Council has made an Order to impose a one-way traffic flow on Various Roads, Faversham, on or after 4 April 2011 for up to 14 weeks or until the works have been completed.

The roads affected, dates of phases and alternative routes are as shown below.

WILLIAM STREET will become one-way eastbound for its whole length, from 4 April 2011 for up to 14 weeks. The alternative routes are via Park Road and Chapel Street or East Street

Phase 1 – ST MARY'S ROAD will become One-way northbound only, between the junctions with Beaumont Terrace and East Street
From 4 April 2011 for up to 6 weeks
The alternative route for southbound traffic is via East Street and St John's Road

Phase 2 – WILLIAM STREET
From 16 May 2011 for up to 2 weeks
Works in William Street between St Mary's Road and St John's Road

Phase 3 - ST JOHN'S ROAD will become One-way northbound only, between the junctions with William Street and East Street
From 30 May 2011 for up to 6 weeks
The alternative route for southbound traffic is via East Street, St Mary's Road and William Street

The dates of the second and third phases are approximate guidelines, and may vary subject to weather and ground conditions. The exact dates will be notified to local residents and signposted on site. The Order is in force when the appropriate signs are in place.

VARIOUS ROADS, SWALE (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting through traffic on Various Roads, Swale, as part of a programme of Highway Micro-surfacing.

The Order takes effect on or after 4 April 2011 for up to 3 months or until the works have been completed.

The roads affected, dates of closure and alternative routes are as shown below. These dates include some weekend working apart from Bank Holiday weekends.

BRADLEY DRIVE / PARK DRIVE, SITTINGBOURNE
From 4 April 2011 until 7 April 2011
Access to be maintained via alternative junction

MURSTON ROAD/CHURCH ROAD, SITTINGBOURNE (through to 10 metres north of Tonge Road)
From 5 April 2011 until 9 April 2011
Alternative route via A2 Canterbury Road, Hempstead Lane, Lower Road, Lomas Road and Tonge Road
There will be a suspension of the One-way Orders in respect of the following roads during this period, to allow access to residents, when the relevant signs are covered or removed
THOMAS ROAD between Murston Road and Cowper Road
GOODNESTONE ROAD for its entire length
SHORTLANDS ROAD between Murston Road and Cowper Road and between Harold Road and Goodnestone Road

COOMBE DRIVE, SITTINGBOURNE
From 6 April 2011 until 8 April 2011
Access will be maintained via alternative junction

OAK LANE, MINSTER
From 26 May 2011 until 31 May 2011
No alternative route as No Through Road - access will be maintained whenever it is safe to do so

RASPBERRY HILL LANE, IWADE – between Old Ferry Road and Basser Hill
From 27 May 2011 until 7 June 2011
Alternative route via Basser Hill, School Lane, The Street and Old Ferry Road

The works are weather dependant and may be delayed by adverse conditions. Works that are missed will be deferred until later in the programme with the revised dates signposted on site.

VARIOUS ROADS, SWALE (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting through traffic on Various Roads, Swale, as part of a programme of highway Surfacing Dressing.

The Order takes effect on or after 20 April 2011 for up to 3 months or until the works have been completed.

The roads affected, dates of closure and alternative routes are as shown below. Each road will be closed twice, initially 1 day for Surfacing and then 1 day for sweeping and lining.

WORMDALE HILL/ROAD, NEWINGTON – between Maidstone Road and Bull Lane
Surfacing on 20 April 2011 then sweeping & lining on 27 April 2011
Alternative routes
Eastbound via Maidstone Road, Chestnut Street, A2 Keycol Hill, Boyces Hill, High Street and Bull Lane
Westbound via Bull Lane, Church Lane, Church Hill, A249 Sittingbourne Road and Maidstone Road

BULL LANE, NEWINGTON – between Wormdale Road and Playstool Road
Surfacing on 20 April 2011 then sweeping & lining on 27 April 2011
Alternative route via Playstool Road, A2 London Road, Hartlip Hill, Lower Hartlip Road, Old House Lane and Bull Lane.

MILL LANE, HARTLIP – between A2 Hartlip Hill and The Street
Surfacing on 20 April 2011 then sweeping & lining on 27 April 2011
A2 Hartlip Hill, Lower Hartlip Road, Hollow Lane and The Street

NEWHOUSE LANE, SHELDWICH – between A251 Ashford Road and Winding Hill
Surfacing on 26 April 2011 then sweeping & lining on 3 May 2011
Alternative route via A251 Ashford Road, Lees Court Road, Fisher Street Road, Reynolds Grove Road, Shepherds Hill, Hoggens Hill, Winding Hill, Featherbed Lane, Selling Road and Owens Court Road

WARDEN ROAD, EASTCHURCH – between Plough Road and High Street
Surfacing on 8 May 2011 then sweeping & lining on 15 May 2011
Alternative route via High Street, Lower Road, Eastchurch Road, Chequers Road and Plough Road

LOWER ROAD, EASTCHURCH – from Eastchurch Roundabout to Shardens Farm
Surfacing on 8 May 2011 then sweeping & lining on 15 May 2011

Alternative route via Queenborough Road, A250 Halfway Road, B2008 Minster Road, Back Lane, Chapel St, Chequers Road and Eastchurch Road

SCOCLES ROAD, MINSTER – between Back Lane and Lower Road
Surfacing on 9 May 2011 then sweeping & lining on 16 May 2011
Alternative route via Back Lane, B2008 Minster Road, Barton Hill Drive and Lower Road

MUNNS LANE, HARTLIP – between Lower Hartlip Road and The Street
Surfacing on 9 May 2011 then sweeping & lining on 16 May 2011
Alternative route via Lower Hartlip Road, Hollow Lane and The Street

WINDING HILL, SELLING – between Newhouse Lane and Featherbed Lane
Surfacing on 9 May 2011 then sweeping & lining on 16 May 2011
Alternative route via Featherbed Lane, Selling Road and Owens Court Road

HEMPSTED LANE, TONGE – between A2 London Road and Scraps Hill
Surfacing on 9 May 2011 then sweeping & lining on 16 May 2011

Alternative route via A2, Frogнал Lane and Lower Road
SELLING ROAD, SELLING – between Vicarage Lane and Selling Road
Surfacing on 10 May 2011 then sweeping & lining on 17 May 2011
Alternative route via Vicarage Lane and Selling Road

HIGHWAYS - District of Thanet

A299 CANTERBURY ROAD WEST, MANSTON (PROHIBITION OF OVERTAKING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

For the safety of the public during construction of the new East Kent Access Road, Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting overtaking on the new southernmost carriageway of the A299 Canterbury Road West, Manston, between the new Cliffsend Roundabout and the Minster Roundabout.

This Order takes effect on or after 4 April 2011 for up to 18 months or until the works have been completed, as and when the relevant signs are displayed on site.

VARIOUS ROADS, THANET (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting through traffic on Various Roads, Thanet, as part of a programme of highway resurfacing.

The Order takes effect on or after 4 April 2011 for up to 3 months or until the works have been completed.

The roads affected, dates of closure and alternative routes are as shown below. These dates include some weekend working.

APPROACH ROAD / NORTHDOWN PARK ROAD, MARGATE
From 4 April 2011 until 7 April 2011
Alternative routes
EAST BOUND – Dane Road, Upper Dane Road, Millmead Road and Laleham Road
WEST BOUND – Northumberland Avenue, Northdown Road and Wilderness Hill

LOWER NORTHDOWN AVENUE / WYNDHAM AVENUE, MARGATE
From 4 April 2011 until 7 April 2011
Alternative route via Northdown Park Road, Northumberland Avenue and Northdown Road

NORTHDOWN WAY, MARGATE
From 4 April 2011 until 9 April 2011
Alternative route via Northdown Park Road, Millmead Avenue, Millmead Road and Northdown Way

ST ANTHONY'S WAY, MARGATE
From 4 April 2011 until 9 April 2011
Alternative route via Northdown Park Road, Millmead Avenue, Millmead Road and Tenterden Way

TENTERDEN WAY, MARGATE
From 4 April 2011 until 9 April 2011
Alternative route via Millmead Road, Northdown Way and St Anthony's Way

MARSHALL CRESCENT, BROADSTAIRS
From 6 April 2011 until 12 April 2011
Access will be maintained from the other junction with Wilkes Road

For further information, please contact
Kent Highway Services, on 08458 247 800
(local rate) or visit www.kent.gov.uk/highways



HIGHWAYS

(WEST) DUMPTON LANE, RAMSGATE
From 9 April 2011 until 13 April 2011
Alternative route via Ramsgate Road, Hereson Road, Cecilia Road and Dumpton Lane

BUTTS ESTATE, MINSTER – DOMNEVA ROAD, ST MARY’S ROAD, THORNE ROAD, MOLINEUX ROAD & TAYLOR ROAD
From 11 April 2011 until 15 April 2011
There are no alternative routes for these roads. Every effort will be made to maintain access whenever it is safe to do so

The works are weather dependant and may be delayed by adverse conditions. Works that are missed will be deferred until later in the programme with the revised dates signposted on site.

HIGHWAYS - Borough of Tonbridge & Malling

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL (EAST MALLING PARKING PLAN – IN THE BOROUGH OF TONBRIDGE & MALLING) (WAITING RESTRICTION AND ON-STREET PARKING PLACES) (AMENDMENT NO. 4) ORDER, 2011

Notice is hereby given that the KENT COUNTY COUNCIL acting as the local traffic authority and in exercise of its powers under Sections 1, 2 & 4 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 as amended, and of all other enabling powers and after consultation with the Chief Officer of Police in accordance with Part III of Schedule 9 to the said Act, made the above Order on 31st March, 2011

The effect of the Order will be to introduce The East Malling Parking Plan to improve access, safety and balance parking availability, as follows:

1. A Residents Preferential Parking scheme is proposed for the following roads: Chapel Street, Church Walk, High Street, eastern end of Mill Street and the Access Road to The Village Field Car Park, With parking restricted to marked, designated on-street parking bays where road width, junctions and access points allow, with a limit of 4 hours (no return 2 hours) between 8am – 6pm, Monday to Friday. Qualifying permit holders to be exempt from these restrictions.
2. It is proposed to install restrictions in the lay-by in Twisden Road to assist with customer parking with parking limited to 1 hour (no return 1 hour) between 8am and 6pm, Monday to Saturday.
3. Advisory roadside parking areas without waiting restrictions are proposed at the southern end of Middle Mill Road and the western end of Mill Street, where road width, junctions and access points allow to reduce obstruction and improve access for through traffic and public transport services.
4. An additional Disabled Persons Parking Bay is proposed in Church Walk and in the Access Road to The Village Field Car Park.
5. It is proposed to reduce the operating times of existing day-time waiting restrictions (single yellow lines) in The Rocks Road to prohibit parking between 10am to 10.30am Monday to Friday and extend this restriction towards the junction of Gilletts Lane. The same day-time restrictions are proposed for the full length of Rocks Close. These restrictions are proposed as a minimum measure to prevent long-term parking near East Malling Train Station.
6. It is proposed to introduce no waiting “At Any Time” (double yellow lines) in specific locations where it is necessary to reinforce the rules of the Highway Code and prevent parking in unsuitable places - The Access Road to The Village Field Car Park, Beech Road, Carnation Close, Carnation Crescent, Chapman Way, Chapel Street, Columbine Road, Cottenham Close, Elm Crescent, High Street, Jasmine Road, Larkspur Road, Lavender Road, Lilac Green, Lime Crescent, Mill Street, Middle Mill Road, New Road, Rocks Road, Stickens Lane, The Grange, The Rocks Road, Twisden Road and Wateringbury Road.

7. It is proposed to amend the layout of the ‘School Keep Clear’ restrictions in Chapman Way to protect the revised vehicular and pedestrian access arrangements to St James the Great Primary School and The Children’s Centre. This is to support the aims of the School Travel Plan to improve safety for vulnerable child pedestrians. No change is proposed to the operating times of the existing restrictions
- The Order sets the cost of a residents parking permit at £30 per annum (£120 for business permits) which includes a card of 10 visitors vouchers. Additional visitors’ vouchers are set at the cost of £10 for a card of 10 visitors vouchers.
- The Order will contain the usual exemptions to enable a vehicle to wait with police permission or for passengers to board or alight, for the loading and unloading of goods, for enabling work to be carried out in or adjacent to the road, for disabled persons and for emergency vehicles.

A copy of the Order together with a map, a copy of the Order to be amended by the Order, and a copy of the Councils reasons for making the Order, may be inspected during normal office hours at the offices of Tonbridge and Malling Council Offices, Kings Hill, Tonbridge Castle Gateway Centre, Kent County Council, Sessions House, County Hall Maidstone and East Malling and Larkfield Parish Council Offices, Church Farm, New Hythe Lane, Larkfield.

Anyone wishing to question the validity of the Order or of any of its provisions on the grounds that they are not within the powers conferred by the Act of 1984 as amended, or that any requirement of the Act of 1984 or any instrument made under them has not been complied with may, within six weeks from the date of the Order, make application for that purpose to the High Court. The Order will come into effect on 4th April, 2011.

Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Parking Action Plan

The East Malling Parking Plan is a community built project developed through consultation with local people

HIGHWAYS - District of Tunbridge Wells

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL (CLEVELAND, ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS) (PROHIBITION OF WAITING) ORDER 2011

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL (hereinafter referred to as “the Council”) acting as the local traffic authority and in exercise of its powers under Sections 1, 2, 4 and 124 of and Part IV of Schedule 9 to the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (hereinafter referred to as the “Act of 1984”) and as amended by the Traffic Management Act 2004 Part 6 and of all other enabling powers and after consultation with the Chief Officer of Police in accordance with Part III of Schedule 9 to the Act of 1984, hereby makes the following Order.

The effect of the Order will be to introduce no waiting at any time (double yellow lines) on various lengths of Cleveland, Tunbridge Wells.

Full details are contained in the draft Order which, together with the relevant plans, any Orders amended by the proposals and a statement of the Council’s reasons for proposing to make the Order may be examined on Mondays to Fridays at the Council Offices, Town Hall, Civic Way, Royal Tunbridge Wells from 4 April 2011.

If you wish to offer support for or object to the proposed order you should send the grounds in writing to, Network Performance Team, 1st Floor Invicta House, Invicta House, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1XX by noon on Monday 25 April 2011.

Katherine Kerswell
Group Managing Director
Invicta House, County Hall
Maidstone
Kent, ME14 1XX

Dated 3rd April 2011

For further information, please contact
Kent Highway Services, on 08458 247 800
(local rate) or visit www.kent.gov.uk/highways



PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

PROW - City of Canterbury

NOTICE OF MODIFICATION ORDER

WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE ACT 1981

DEFINITIVE MAP AND STATEMENT FOR THE FORMER EXCLUDED AREA OF WHITSTABLE

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL (PUBLIC FOOTPATH CWX41 AT WHITSTABLE)

DEFINITIVE MAP MODIFICATION ORDER 2011

The above Order was made on 18th March 2011 under section 53 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. If confirmed, it will modify the Definitive Map and Statement for the area by adding a Footpath (CWX41) which commences on Green Lane and runs in a northerly direction for 55 metres before turning in a north- easterly direction and continuing for 44 metres to its connection with Harwich Street (Between the points A and B on the Order Plan). The path has a width of 0.9 metres at its entrance from Green Lane and widens to 1.2 metres for the first 55 metres, the path widens to 1.4 metres for the remaining 44 metres. The route then narrows at its connection with Harwich Street to 0.9 metres due to a lamppost on the route.

All distances are approximate, all directions are general.

A copy of the Order and Map may be seen free of charge during normal office hours at the offices of Canterbury City Council, Military Road, Canterbury, Kent, CT1 1YW or at the Kent County Council, Countryside Access Service, Invicta House, County Hall, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1XX. Copies of the Order and Map may also be purchased there.

Any representation about or objection to the Order must be sent or delivered in writing to Matthew Garvey at the Kent County Council (address as below) no later than 16 May 2011. Please state the grounds on which it is made.

If no such representations or objections are duly made to the Order (or to any part of it), or if any so made are withdrawn, the Kent County Council, instead of submitting the Order to the Secretary of State (or part of it if the Authority has by Notice to the Secretary of State so elected under paragraph 5 of schedule 15 to the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981) may itself confirm the Order (or that part of the Order). If the Order is sent to the Secretary of State for the Environment (in whole or in part), any representations or objections which have been duly made and not been withdrawn will be sent with it.

PROW - Borough of Maidstone

NOTICE OF PUBLIC PATH DIVERSION AND DEFINITIVE MAP AND STATEMENT MODIFICATION ORDER

HIGHWAYS ACT 1980

WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE ACT 1981

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL (PUBLIC FOOTPATH KH49, BREDHURST)

PUBLIC PATH DIVERSION AND DEFINITIVE MAP AND STATEMENT MODIFICATION ORDER 2011

The above Order, made under Section 119 of the Highways Act 1980 will divert the entire width of that length of public footpath numbered KH49 which commences on The Street between the properties Cabana and Cherry Tree at NGR TQ 7973 6239 (Point A on the Order plan) and runs eastwards for 388 metres to its connection with public bridleway KH49A and Kemsley Street Road at NGR TQ 8010 6231 (point B on the Order plan), to a new length of Public Footpath KH49 with a width of 3.5 metres between fencing, which commences at the aforementioned point B and runs north-westwards for 184 metres to its connection to Kemsley Street Road at NGR TQ 7996 6242 (point C on the Order plan).

The above notice(s) may be provided in other formats

For further information, please contact
Kent Countryside Access Service, on 0845 345 0210 (Mon-Fri 8am-8pm)
or visit www.kent.gov.uk/countrysideaccess



All directions general, all distances approximate.

A copy of the Order and the Map have been placed and may be seen free of charge at the offices of Maidstone Borough Council, Maidstone House, King Street, Maidstone, Kent, ME16 8HG or at the Environment & Waste Division at Invicta House, County Hall, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1XX, during office hours. Copies of the Order and Map may be purchased there.

Any representations about or objections to the Order may be sent in writing to Mrs Maria McLauchlan at Countryside Access Service, Invicta House, County Hall, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1XX (Tel: 01622 696871) before 6th May 2011. Please state the grounds on which they are made.

If no representations or objections are duly made, or if any so made are withdrawn, Kent County Council may confirm the Order as an unopposed Order. If the Order is sent to the Secretary of State for the Environment for confirmation any representations and objections which have not been withdrawn will be sent with the Order.

PROW - Borough of Tonbridge & Malling

NOTICE OF MODIFICATION ORDER

WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE ACT 1981

DEFINITIVE MAP AND STATEMENT FOR THE COUNTY OF KENT

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL (BRIDLEWAY MT416 AT SHIPBOURNE)

DEFINITIVE MAP MODIFICATION ORDER 2011

The above Order was made on 18th March 2011 under section 53 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. If confirmed, it will modify the Definitive Map and Statement for the area by adding a Bridleway (MT416) with a width of 3 metres which commences at the south-eastern corner of Avenue Cottage on public bridleway MT50 at NGR TQ 5895 5092 (Point A), running in a south south- westerly direction for 19 metres to rejoin public bridleway MT50 at NGR 5894 5090 (Point B). (Between Point A and B on the Order Plan).

All distances are approximate, all directions are general.

A copy of the Order and Map may be seen free of charge during normal office hours at the offices of Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council, Gibson Building, Gibson Drive, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4LZ or at the Kent County Council, Countryside Access Service, Invicta House, County Hall, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1XX. Copies of the Order and Map may also be purchased there.

Any representation about or objection to the Order must be sent or delivered in writing to Matthew Garvey at the Kent County Council (address as below) no later than 16 May 2011. Please state the grounds on which it is made.

If no such representations or objections are duly made to the Order (or to any part of it), or if any so made are withdrawn, the Kent County Council, instead of submitting the Order to the Secretary of State (or part of it if the Authority has by Notice to the Secretary of State so elected under paragraph 5 of schedule 15 to the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981) may itself confirm the Order (or that part of the Order). If the Order is sent to the Secretary of State for the Environment (in whole or in part), any representations or objections which have been duly made and not been withdrawn will be sent with it.

Countryside Access Service
Kent County Council
Invicta House
County Hall
Maidstone
Kent ME14 1XX

Date: 03 April 2011

To place your notice here call the Kent Public Notice team
on
01303 817044

THE WEDDING SHOW

Leeds Castle, Kent

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SATURDAY 15TH & SUNDAY 16TH OCTOBER 2011, 10AM - 5PM DAILY

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Driving

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IAINDOOLEY

Mercedes Benz C-Class

TWO BIG numbers you need to be aware of when considering Mercedes-Benz's revised C-Class: 2,000 changes have been made to the car and, since it was launched in 2007, more than one million have been sold.

Through the decades the C-Class has charted a steady course straddling both sporty and luxury sides of the compact premium experience and always aiming to offer elements of its larger models at a more affordable price point. Now, with ever-increasing focus on emissions, con-

sumption and refinement, Mercedes has thoroughly revamped its core model – prices start at £25,515.

The car's nose and tail have been tweaked slightly – radiator, lights, that sort of thing – and there's still the visual difference between 'classic' SE/Elegance and Sport models, with the latter boasting a subtle AMG branded bodykit, AMG wheels and a lower ride height.

Inside there's a new dashboard design, the car's colour display screen is now fixed in the upper level of the fascia and the general impression is a welcome shift to a simpler layout inspired in part by the CLS.

Some things don't change, though. The cabin ambience is as refined as ever, and the wide choice of trim, seat and instrument colour options ensure both young and old buyers are catered for.

Mercedes hopes everyone will benefit from reduced running costs, in particular company car drivers opting for four-cylinder diesel variants. Bold claims are made that every new engine is both more powerful and more efficient than its predecessor.

While all cars come with a six-speed

manual gearbox as standard, there's now the option of an improved seven-speed auto across the range. Another feature across the range is engine stop-start technology to further boost the car's eco credentials.

The end result is a more frugal ownership experience. Taking the C220 CDI (from £30,975) for example: in manual form the car posts an impressive 117g/km CO2 rating and 64.2mpg on the combined cycle.

The best news of all is the complete lack of compromise behind the wheel. Manual transmission Mercedes cars haven't been that great in the past, but things have improved in recent years. The gearbox in the C220 CDI, like other variants, delivers a slick, accurate performance. Engine refinement is also first rate, while performance is more than you could ask for. A willing unit, the 2.1-litre, four-cylinder is quiet and responsive in equal measure.

Ride comfort is also very good, with a sensible balance of comfort and agility. Pitch and roll is minimal, while the Sport vari-

ant's tuned suspension and bigger wheels don't harm but rather enhance the experience for enthusiastic drivers. In the petrol-driven car the experience is broadly similar, only the engine is that bit quieter.

Along with the improved driving experience, the C-Class comes with a wider choice of standard and optional equipment.

There's a heavy bias towards safety kit, with a lot of 'big car' stuff from the E, CLS and S-Class having trickled down to the C-Class. From lane departure and blind spot warning systems to active dipping headlights and intelligent cruise control, the car isn't short of helpful toys.

The same is true on the comfort front, with the optional sat-nav supported by standard fit climate and cruise control, a multi-function steering wheel and the usual electric mirrors and windows.

UK buyers can choose from SE, Elegance and Sport, with the latter adding a subtle AMG bodykit and branded wheels, lower ride height, speed sensitive steering, sports front seats, a three-spoke steering wheel and gearchange paddles for auto gearbox variants.



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2010(10) NISSAN QASHQAI ACENTA SDR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 4000 miles	£17,995
2010(60) VAUXHALL ZAFIRA ELITE CDTI TURBO MPV AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 3000 miles	£16,995
2010(60) VAUXHALL MERIVA SE CDTI TO MPV AUTO, GREY, 5000 miles	£16,995
2010(10) VAUXHALL ASTRA ELITE SDR HATCH AUTO, GREEN, 950 miles	£15,995
2010(60) VAUXHALL ASTRA SE SDR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 2000 miles	£14,995
2010(60) MERCEDES-BENZ A CLASS A160 CLASSIC SE SDR HATCH AUTO, MOUNTAIN GREY, 1610 miles	£13,995
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2010(60) VOLKSWAGEN POLO SE DSG SDR HATCH AUTO, NIMBUS GREY, 999 miles	£12,995
2010(60) FORD FIESTA TITANIUM SDR HATCH AUTO, HOT MAGENTA, 2000 miles	£12,995
2010(60) NISSAN NOTE TEKNA MPV AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 300 miles	£11,995
2010(60) NISSAN NOTE TEKNA MPV AUTO, RED, 600 miles	£11,995
2010(60) PEUGEOT 308 S SDR HATCH AUTO, GREY, 1000 miles	£10,995
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2009(09) VAUXHALL AGILA DESIGN SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 5000 miles	£8,995
2010(60) NISSAN PUXO N-TEC SDR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 899 miles	£7,995
2010(60) PEUGEOT 107 URBAN SDR HATCH, RED, 850 miles	£7,995

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NEW FIESTA

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2010(60) FORD FIESTA TITANIUM 3DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 2000 miles	£11,995
2009(58) FORD FIESTA STYLE PLUS 3DR HATCH AUTO, MOONDUST SILVER, 3000 miles	£8,995
2007(57) FORD FIESTA GHIA 16V SDR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 16000 miles	£6,995

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2009(09) FORD FOCUS ZETEC SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 3000 miles	£10,995
2008(08) FORD FOCUS ZETEC 3DR HATCH AUTO, GREEN, 4000 miles	£8,995
2008(58) FORD FOCUS STYLE SDR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 11000 miles	£8,495
2008(57) FORD FOCUS STYLE SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 7000 miles	£7,995
2008(57) FORD FOCUS STYLE SDR HATCH AUTO, MOONDUST SILVER, 14000 miles	£6,995
2005(55) FORD FOCUS GHIA 16V SDR HATCH AUTO, GREY, 27000 miles	£6,495

FOCUS ESTATES

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2007(57) FORD FOCUS STYLE ESTATE AUTO, GREY, 12000 miles	£6,495

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2007(07) RENAULT SCENIC PRIVILEGE VVT 111 55TR MPV AUTO, GREY, 10000 miles	£7,995
2007(07) RENAULT SCENIC PRIVILEGE VVT 111 55TR MPV AUTO, GREY, 26000 miles	£7,995
2007(07) RENAULT SCENIC PRIVILEGE VVT 111 55TR MPV AUTO, RED, 13000 miles	£7,995
2008(57) RENAULT SCENIC DYNAMIQUE VVT 111 55TR MPV AUTO, BLUE, 19000 miles	£6,995

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2010(57) RENAULT SCENIC EXPRESSION VVT MPV AUTO, CHAMPAGNE, 12000 miles	£11,995
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2007(57) RENAULT MEGANE PRIVILEGE VVT 136 75TR MPV AUTO, BLUE, 8000 miles	£8,995
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2006(56) RENAULT MEGANE PRIVILEGE VVT 111 CONVERTIBLE AUTO, BLUE, 14000 miles	£8,995
2006(06) RENAULT MEGANE DYNAMIQUE VVT 111 CONVERTIBLE AUTO, BLUE, 21000 miles	£7,995
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2008(58) VAUXHALL CORSA DESIGN 16V SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 12000 miles	£8,995
2008(58) VAUXHALL CORSA CLUB AC 16V SDR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 9000 miles	£8,495
2008(58) VAUXHALL CORSA CLUB AC 16V SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 5000 miles	£8,495
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SUZUKI

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2007(57) TOYOTA PRIUS T SPIRIT VVT-I SDR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 8000 miles	£12,995
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2005(55) TOYOTA YARIS VERSO T3 VVT-I MPV AUTO, CHAMPAGNE, 25000 miles	£6,495
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2010(10) NISSAN QASHQAI TEKNA SDR HATCH AUTO, BLADE SILVER, 10000 miles	£19,995
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2007(57) NISSAN MICRA ACENTA PLUS SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 12000 miles	£6,995
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2005(54) NISSAN ALMERA SE SDR HATCH AUTO, CHAMPAGNE, 9000 miles	£4,995
2009(59) NISSAN ALMERA S SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 11000 miles	£4,995
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2010(59) VAUXHALL ASTRA DESIGN 16V E4 SDR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 12000 miles	£9,495
2009(59) VAUXHALL ASTRA LIFE AC SDR HATCH AUTO, GREEN, 2000 miles	£8,995
2009(09) VAUXHALL ASTRA DESIGN 16V E4 SDR HATCH AUTO, SILVER LIGHTNING, 14000 miles	£8,995
2008(58) VAUXHALL ASTRA DESIGN 16V E4 SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 3000 miles	£8,495
2009(58) VAUXHALL ASTRA DESIGN 16V E4 SDR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 8000 miles	£8,495
2008(58) VAUXHALL ASTRA LIFE AC 16V E4 SDR HATCH AUTO, ULTRA BLUE, 11000 miles	£7,495
2007(57) VAUXHALL ASTRA DESIGN 16V E4 SDR HATCH AUTO, TURQUOISE, 20000 miles	£6,995
2007(57) VAUXHALL ASTRA DESIGN 16V E4 SDR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 19000 miles	£6,995
2008(08) VAUXHALL ASTRA LIFE AC 16V E4 SDR HATCH AUTO, BEIGEBUFF, 14000 miles	£6,495
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2008(57) VAUXHALL ASTRA LIFE AC 16V E4 SDR HATCH AUTO, TURQUOISE, 16000 miles	£5,995
2008(08) VAUXHALL ASTRA LIFE AC 16V E4 SDR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 16000 miles	£5,995
2008(57) VAUXHALL ASTRA LIFE AC 16V E4 SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 3000 miles	£5,995

NEW MODEL ASTRA

2010(10) VAUXHALL ASTRA ELITE SDR HATCH AUTO, GREEN, 950 miles	£15,995
2010(60) VAUXHALL ASTRA SE SDR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 2000 miles	£14,995
2011(60) VAUXHALL ASTRA SE ESTATE AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 300 miles	£14,995
2010(10) VAUXHALL ASTRA SRI SDR HATCH AUTO, STAR SILVER, 1900 miles	£13,995

ASTRA ESTATES

2009(09) VAUXHALL ASTRA LIFE AC 140 ESTATE AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 9000 miles	£7,995
2008(58) VAUXHALL ASTRA LIFE AC 140 ESTATE AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 8000 miles	£7,995
2008(08) VAUXHALL ASTRA LIFE AC 140 ESTATE AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 12000 miles	£6,995
2007(57) VAUXHALL ASTRA DESIGN 140 ESTATE AUTO, BLUE, 14000 miles	£6,995
2006(56) VAUXHALL ASTRA DESIGN 16V ESTATE AUTO, PANNACOTTA, 16000 miles	£6,495
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2009(09) VAUXHALL ZAFIRA EXCLUSIV CDTI TO MPV AUTO, ICE GREEN, 9000 miles	£12,995
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ZAFIRA MERIVA & AGILA

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2007(57) VAUXHALL ZAFIRA LIFE 16V MPV AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 14000 miles	£7,995
2007(57) VAUXHALL ZAFIRA LIFE 16V MPV AUTO, TURQUOISE, 13000 miles	£7,995
2008(57) VAUXHALL ZAFIRA LIFE 16V MPV AUTO, PANNACOTTA, 11000 miles	£7,995
2008(57) VAUXHALL MERIVA LIFE 16V MPV AUTO, BLUE, 6000 miles	£6,995
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FIRST GEAR



Saab goes even further upmarket with new 9-3

SAAB has revamped its mainstay compact executive 9-3 model, with luxury as the hallmark.

Standard kit includes alloys, leather-trimmed interior, heated front seats, park assist, Bluetooth phone integration, automatic dimming mirrors inside and outside the vehicle, electric folding mirrors and automatic rain sensor wipers as standard.

The 9-3 also has a racier new look with new front bumpers, headlamps and grille and all saloon variants receive a boot-mounted aerodynamic spoiler.

Under the bonnet, two new 2.0-litre petrol turbo engines produce 163bhp and 220bhp and include direct injection. Both units are available with a six-speed manual and automatic transmission.

In terms of CO2 per unit of horsepower, the new manual 220bhp 2.0-litre petrol engine in the 9-3 Aero saloon and SportWagon (estate) is the most powerful sub 160g/km unit on sale in the UK.

The 9-3 1.9-litre manual twin turbo diesel line-up also offers class-leading CO2 emissions of 119g. New 9-3 prices start at £21,495.

Peugeot supermini gets Euro reliability crown

WARRANTY Direct has revealed that the most reliable car made by a European car company is the Peugeot 207 – model line-up pictured.

The direct sale consumer warranty firm analysed more than 20,000 live policies on three- to

seven-year-old cars made by European manufacturers and compared claims for repairs.

This survey showed that the enormous popularity of Peugeot's top-selling supermini is down to more than good looks, economy,

practicality and a fun-to-drive nature. Owners of the French model suffered a repair rate of just six per cent in an average year – the next best contender, but some distance behind, was the Fiat Panda at 14 per cent.



'Swapsies' deal may help the ix35 queue



HYUNDAI is offering to help buyers on a lengthening waiting list for its popular ix35 model.

The Korean marque says its ix35 1.7-litre diesel model is more freely available, allowing Hyundai to offer such cars to its 200 longest waiting customers as an interim solution.

The offer will enable customers to own a new 1.7-litre diesel manual ix35 immediately, and run it until their order for a ix35 2.0-litre diesel version is ready. Customers can then move to the new 2.0-litre car – all for the price of their original order.

Hyundai UK's managing director, Tony Whitehorn, said: "Customer satisfaction is our priority and we hope that this offer of an alternative ix35 will be attractive for our longest waiting customers."



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Seat's little tax busters

by
SAM DAVISON

CHANCELLOR George Osborne's Budget has put Seat's super-frugal line-up of Ibiza E Ecomotive models in pole position for fleet and business drivers looking to keep a lid on their company car tax and running costs.

Company car tax – referred to as benefit in kind (BIK) – is based on a percentage of the vehicle's recommended retail price, the type of fuel it uses, the amount of CO2 it emits and the driver's salary level.

Prior to the Chancellor's speech, petrol-engined cars emitting between 99g/km and 120g/km fell into the lowest BIK bracket for



SAVINGS: The Seat Ibiza E Ecomotive range can help business drivers cut tax costs

conventional-engined vehicles and were taxed at 10 per cent. Low-emitting diesels like the Ibiza, meanwhile, were taxed at 13 per cent because of the three per cent diesel surcharge.

However, the Chancellor's decision to tighten the lower limit for low-carbon vehicles from April, 2013, reduces that bottom BIK threshold to 94g/km or below.

Fortunately for latest generation Ibiza E

Ecomotive drivers, or prospective purchasers, their cars will still qualify for the very lowest diesel BIK rate of 13 per cent thanks to CO2 emissions as low as 92g/km.

Ally this to the fact that Ibiza E Ecomotives – available in sporty SC, practical 5dr and capacious ST estate bodystyles – are capable of more than 80mpg on the official combined cycle and it's easy to see them tempting more fleet and company managers and their drivers.

Seat UK fleet sales chief Nick Andrews, said: "The Ibiza E Ecomotive range is proving increasingly attractive to a wide variety of our customers with, in particular, the ST version making great inroads thanks to its practicality and style."

The third generation 'green' Ibiza, now badged E Ecomotive to reflect its super-frugal performance, achieves its eco status through a tweaked 75PS (74bhp) 1.2-litre diesel, Start/Stop technology and recovery of energy from braking to recharge the battery, this last by-passing the alternator and saving a drain on the engine.

Prices for these greenest Ibizas start at £13,490.

BARRETT'S of Canterbury's Accident Repair Centre is celebrating a coveted award from German premium manufacturer BMW.

The Barretts group, established in 1902, operates Broad Oak BMW dealerships in Canterbury and Ashford backed by the repair centre, which has just been made 2010 BMW Bodyshop of the Year after a period of review and enhancement of its services.

Barretts' MD Paul Barrett said: "This award demonstrates what can be achieved with determination and focus. I am delighted for workshop manager Darren Blunden and his team.

"The changes we have made mean that

Barretts scoops BMW award

whether a customer meets one of our bodyshop advisors in Ashford, or one of our receptionists in Canterbury, they experience the same high-quality service and consistent experience of the Barretts brand."

He added that, in difficult trading conditions, bodyshops were increasingly recognising that every client contact provides an opportunity to develop new sales opportunities.

"There is much talk of 'up-selling'," he said.

"But the best results are achieved by organisations which adopt a coherent customer service philosophy that extends throughout the business.

"Barretts is a prime example of a company that is achieving success by adopting a 'joined-up' approach to influencing retail customers; putting in place systems and processes that have enabled them to overcome the universal challenge of maintaining

effective communications across multiple sites."

Darren Blunden said: "We already had good customer service processes in place. However, the workshop focused all our minds on the factors critical to our success in terms of seeking out new business from existing clients, the importance of adopting consistent practices across all sites and proactive marketing of the Barretts brand.

"Later, with great audit results, a strong training record and achievement of our Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), we're going from strength-to-strength."

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- 2005 VAUXHALL ASTRA CLUB AUTOMATIC, 1.8, black, 5dr, hatch, CD radio, only 41,000, lovely condition, alloys, A/C, compare this price!... ~~£4,995~~ **£4,495**
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- 2001 Honda Accord 2.0 auto, 5 dr, silver, all usual extras including e/w, pas, cruise, alloys... ~~£2,495~~ **£2,495**
- 2002 PEUGEOT 206 1.4 LX 2 dr hatchback, low insurance model, Silver, s/roof, pas, C/L, etc £2,195... ~~£2,195~~ **£2,195**
- 2001 MGZR 1.8VVT, 5 dr, silver, body kit, alloys, 80k, black/blue leather sports trim, 80k, manual... ~~£1,995~~ **£1,995**
- 1999 VW GOLF 1.6 SE 5 SP MANUAL, green, 5 dr hatch, e/w, PAS, A/C with 1 year MOT + 6 mths tax... ~~£1,995~~ **£1,795**
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DrivingReview

by

SAM DAVISON

Chevrolet Orlando

IT CAN'T be an accident that Chevrolet has created an all-new seven-seat MPV named after the theme park capital of the world – Orlando in Florida.

It offers entertainment with every ride, minus the bumps and worst rolling motion of some other MPVs I could mention.

It is also good value, cramming in seven comfortably and with Transatlantic lines that suggest some Florida sunshine might be glinting off the gold Chevy badge on the grille.

However, the newcomer will not be sold in the States, probably because it is a tad small for the home market's burger and fries-fuelled demographics.

But that muscular styling makes it stand apart in a rather more slimline UK and European MPV market and, combined with good handling characteristics for this sector, should attract male buyers who would normally have to be strong-armed into buying a people carrier "for the sake of the family".

The beefy Orlando's good manners derive from a slightly stretched version of the same platform used for the US brand's sharply styled middleweight saloon, the Cruze, and the hugely impressive Astra hatchback from GM stablemate Vauxhall.

The latter also produces the big-selling Zafira seven-seater and will surely be marked that GM bosses have allowed Chevy to launch such a competent in-house rival to muscle in when there is quite enough other pressure from the revised VW Touran and Mazda5, all-



Chevy 'fun bus' makes change to boring MPVs

new – though pug-ugly – Ford Grand C-Max, suave Peugeot 5008 and futuristic Citroen C4 Grand Picasso.

Adding insult to injury, the arrangement and versatility of the Orlando's seven seats is also reminiscent of the Zafira, with decent accommo-

dation for all but the leggiest adults in the rear pair, while conversion from full seven-up mode to cavernous van and to all other permutations takes just seconds.

I was also impressed by cabin quality; Chevrolet's global market aspirations took off

when GM acquired the failed Korean Daewoo motor operation a few years ago, but it inherited some terrible interior finishing that is fast being addressed.

But while you can sort the visual and tactile quality relatively easily, the design and

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ergonomics takes more practice and the Korean-built Orlando really could do with more stowage space – though the boot is huge when the rearmost chairs are folded.

There is also the major gaff of having the front 12v power socket mounted close to the handbrake and gearshift; by the time I had double-connected a sat nav and little un's latest game player it seemed like I was changing gear by plunging my hand into a saucepan of spaghetti.

Of course, the Orlando still won't set your

heart racing in the driving department either – but few MPVs do. However, it is impressive that a large and hefty yet smooth riding vehicle such as this does not loll about too badly.

The 2.0-litre diesel engine, even in the lower 130PS (129bhp) output of the test car, drives this fun bus well too yet still averages in the late 40s for mpg.

On paper, the alternative 163PS (162bhp) diesel offers little more performance, is no better or worse on fuel and will cost more upfront to buy.

The clear-cut buying decision though is avoiding the entry engine option – the 1.8-litre petrol. It will catch the eye with its £16,395 start price plus usual Chevy five-year warranty deal and get you talking to the dealer, but around £1,200 gets you into a diesel and will deliver far better performance and fuel economy – a no brainer.

The 2.0-litre diesel VCDi in mid-range LT trim looks like the right buy for most people and will set you back £18,645 – a lot of Orlando rides for the money.

DrivingPortfolio

CHEVROLET ORLANDO 2.0 LT VCDi 1 £18,645

Driving appeal (OUT OF FIVE)	★★★★
Image	★★★★
Space	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★
How green?	★★★
Road tax	Band G – £155/year
Best rival	Citroën C4 Grand Picasso

The Verdict



DON'T LIKE:

the lack of thought apparent in the cabin layout, but this is nit-picking



NOT SURE:

UK buyers are yet fully aware of Chevrolet's recent gains in quality to add to undoubted value



REALLY LIKE:

how the Orlando stands apart from established players

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03 53 PEUGEOT 307 S TURBO DIESEL, Silver, alloy wheels, air con	£2,995
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02 02 SUZUKI WAGON R+ SPECIAL, Silver, 44,000mls	£2,795
02 52 SUZUKI LIANA GL 5dr, Metallic Red.....	£2,195
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03 03 ROVER 25 1.4i XL, Silver, 5 dr	£1,295
98 S VAUXHALL VECTRA 1.8 LS	£795
01 51 FIAT BRAVA 80SX Silver	£595

MINI

COOPER, 1.6, 2005, abs brakes alloy wheels cd player electric windows immobiliser power steering remote central locking, red, 38123 miles, £7000, Ramsgate, 0844 856 4496 (TRADE)

FOCUS, Zetec Climate, 2007, abs
brakes air con alloys cd central
locking electric windows front fog
lights full service history immobiliser
metallic paint multiple airbags power
steering single trip computer remote

FOCUS, Zetec Climate, 2007, abs brakes air con alloys cd central locking electric windows front fog lights full service history immobiliser metallic paint multiple airbags power steering single trip computer remote central locking blue, 49600 miles, £6500, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

FOCUS, Style, 2009, abs brakes air conditioning cd player central locking drivers airbag electric windows immobiliser power steering trip computer remote central locking, silver, 33602 miles, £7000, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

FOCUS, Style, 2009, abs brakes air conditioning cd player central locking drivers airbag electric windows immobiliser power steering trip computer remote central locking, silver, 33602 miles, £7000, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

FOCUS, Zetec (Climate Pack), 2007, abs brakes air conditioning alloy wheels automatic transmission dc player central locking drivers airbag electric windows immobiliser power steering, black, 13602 miles, £8500, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

GALAXY, 1.9 LX 115ps only 42835 miles and VERY NICE INDEED, 2005, abs brakes air con alarm fitted alloys dc player central locking diesel electric windows full service history immobiliser metallic paint multiple airbags power steering trip computer remote central locking quickclear windowscreen body coloured bumpers, silver, 42835 miles, £7999, Ashford, 0844 826 5918 (TRADE)

GALAXY, 1.9 LX 115ps only 42835 miles and VERY NICE INDEED, 2005, abs brakes air con alarm fitted alloys cd player central locking diesel electric windows full service history immobiliser metallic paint multiple airbags power steering trip computer remote central locking quickclear windscreen body coloured bumpers, silver, 42835 miles, £7999, Ashford, 0844 826 5918 (TRADE)

GALAXY, 2.3, 2008, abs brakes cd player central locking climate control electric windows immobiliser, silver, 50 miles, £29000, Ashford, 0844 826 5918 (TRADE)

STREETKA, 1.6i LUXURY, 2003, tbc,
37704 miles, £5000, Canterbury,
0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

STREETKA, LUXURY, 2003, abs
brakes central locking power
steering, standard colour, 40000
miles, £3500, Ashford, 0844 826
5918 (TRADE)

TRANSIT, 350 LWB High Roof 140ps, 2008, abs brakes bluetooth car kit diesel electric windows immobiliser power steering single cd player side load door steel bulkhead remote central locking, frozen white, 50 miles, £16500, Ashford, 0844 826 5918 (TRADE)

TRANSIT, 350 LWB H/R 2.4TDCI
100ps, 2008, abs cd central locking
diesel drivers airbag immobiliser
power steering traction control ply-
lined side load door steel bulkhead
multi functional tuneport (i-pod and
mp3 connection) dual passenger seat
frozen white, 58000 miles, £8750,
Ashford, 0844 826 5918 (TRADE)

JAGUAR

NOTE, N-TEC, 2009, abs brakes air conditioning alloy wheels bluetooth car kit cd player central locking diesel electric windows power steering, emotion red, 9804 miles, £11000, Ashford, 0844 826 5918 (TRADE)

BOXSTER, 3.2S, 2001, abs brakes air
con alarm fitted alloys cd player
central locking climate control cruise
control drivers airbag electric
windows front fog lights full service

history heated seats immobilizer
metallic paint leather interior multiple
airbags power steering single cd
player sports seats tinted glass
traction control trip computer remote
central locking auto headlights and
wipers remote audio controls body

coloured bumpers height adj drivers
seat space saver spare wheel, blue,
66000 miles, £10000, Tunbridge
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Different elements to measures of inflation

Q What is the difference between inflation as measured by the consumer prices index and the retail prices index? They are both way in front of anything that is offered as an interest rate by the banks, so there is no chance of the ordinary person's savings keeping pace, let alone making a profit.

A Both measures of inflation are based on changes in the cost of living, but they include different ingredients. The biggest difference is that the CPI does not include housing costs. If average rents or mortgage rates rise, the RPI rate of inflation will go up, but the CPI will not be affected. Why does this matter? It matters most to pensioners whose income is linked to rises in the cost of living. A rise in RPI can easily outstrip a rise in the CPI, so a pension tied to the CPI will not fare as well. But I suspect your question is based on savings interest rather than pensions. And you are right – it is hard for savings to keep pace with prices. There are few answers to the question of how you can guard your savings against inflation. The Saffron Building Society (0800 072 1100) offers one of the few accounts that stand a chance of matching inflation. It has a six-year investment account linked to the RPI, and if you use it as an Isa, you can sidestep income tax and get a genuine inflation-proof return. The minimum investment is £3,000, but only dive in if you are sure you can stay the course – pull out early and you will not get the full benefit. The other answer is to sit back and wait. There was a hint in the recent budget that National Savings index-linked certificates are about to make a comeback. No date has been announced but if past performance is anything to go by, we could see a modest real return on top of inflation, which would be good news for all savers.

Q I have about £4,000 outstanding on my Visa card account. If I transfer this to a different card, which will give the longest interest-free period?

A For the past week or two, the answer to your question has changed almost as quickly as I can write it. MBNA (0800 068 8788) broke new ground when it announced it would give 18 months interest-free to new cardholders who switched balances from their old cards. However, there is a "handling fee" of 2.88pc – about £115 to you. Virgin (0800 096 9939) also went for an interest-free period of 18 months on balance transfers, and threw in a zero interest rate on purchases for the first three months. Its transfer fee is 2.89pc, which would also cost you about £115. But Barclaycard (0800 731 0200) seems to be taking the lead. Its interest-free period is now 20 months, though the transfer will cost you 3.2pc, or £128. Whichever you choose, you will only get the

TONY HETHERINGTON
MONEY CLINIC



best deal if you repay your outstanding balance during the interest-free period.

Q I wrote to you a year ago about my shares in Bradford & Bingley. As I said then, the government effectively stole my shares by nationalising the bank and refusing compensation. This decision has now been upheld, so is there any avenue left for shareholders to pursue?

A The government's refusal to compensate shareholders has been upheld by an independent valuer because when the company was nationalised in 2008 it was on the verge of bankruptcy. If the government had withdrawn financial support, Bradford & Bingley would have collapsed and your shares would have been worthless anyway. The real question mark hangs over the issue of fresh shares in the company a couple of months before it failed. If it was solvent then, what made it fail just weeks later? There is an action group of shareholders that is calling for a public inquiry. There are details online at www.bbactiongroup.org, but I would be surprised if any compensation offer emerged from Whitehall now.

Q I paid a bill with a cheque dated for March 1, allowing time for my February pay to get to my bank account, but the company banked the cheque in February and my bank accepted it. This made me overdrawn. Should my bank have honoured the cheque before March 1?

A If you give someone a post-dated cheque, this is nothing more than a request to them not to deposit the cheque before that date. It will not stop your bank cashing the cheque or taking any notice of the date on it, I'm afraid.

Q Is a workplace syndicate in the National Lottery legal and binding? Could the organiser refuse to share out any prize money?

A You would have to prove there was a binding agreement. To be safe, draw up a letter saying how much everyone pays, and how much they would get from any prize money. Then get everyone to sign it, and make copies for each member of the syndicate.

■ If you have a personal finance question, write to Tony Hetherington, MyMoney24, Prospect House, Rouen Road, Norwich NR1 1RE. We regret that neither Tony nor the MyMoney24 team can enter into personal correspondence.



FAMILY AID: Students are being helped with higher fees by their parents and grandparents.

Grandparents support students

Nearly a quarter of all parents and grandparents have begun to make provision for higher university tuition fees, even though most adults think would-be students themselves should take at least some responsibility for paying their way through further education.

The role played by grandparents is highlighted by the Virgin Money research, which suggests that more

than 20pc of people aged over 65 are saving to help their grandchildren through university.

From September next year, annual tuition fees will rise to up to £9,000, although they will be paid in arrears once students earn above a certain level.

Grant Bather of Virgin Money said: "Tuition fees are going to rise substantially and it is clear that

parents and grandparents are already starting to prepare for the financial burden.

"It is interesting that people believe students themselves should be contributing as well. Ultimately, they will be the beneficiaries so there is some justice in them saving.

"However saving for potential bills of up to £27,000 will be a major undertaking."

Time is running out for tax-free saving

People wanting to take advantage of tax-free saving this year have just a few days left to act, otherwise they will lose their annual allowances for good.

The current tax year ends on April 5, and while a lot has been said about the changes due to come in at the start of 2011-12, it's important not to overlook the opportunities that will disappear at the same time.

With average household disposable income falling for the first time in three decades, a growing number of people might find they have no spare cash to save. Others might feel they do not want to put their money away at a time when interest rates are paltry and so few accounts are keeping pace with inflation.

But for those who do want to take advantage of the tax-free benefits of cash Isas, the good news is that rates have been creeping up recently. They are still nowhere near the levels of a few years ago, but it's possible to get rates of 3pc-plus on the high street without too much hunting around and without having to lock your money away for a minimum period.

If you have some money to put away

By ADAM AIKEN
MyMoney24 editor

but you are not sure whether to use this year's £5,100 cash Isa allowance, remember that anything you put aside now will be well placed to benefit when interest rates start to return to their previous healthy levels.

What you cannot do is post-date your allowance – in other words, if you don't use it now, you will not be able to play catch-up in the future.

"The tax benefits may not be massive in year one, but building up an Isa nest egg over a period of years will prove a wise and rewarding strategy," said Andrew Hagger, an analyst at MoneyNet.co.uk.

"With savings rates still historically very low, making use of an Isa is a simple yet effective way of boosting your interest income. The maximum cash deposit for the current tax year is £5,100, but even if you have a smaller sum to save, an Isa still makes financial sense."

There is always a degree of guesswork when it comes to future returns, but there is a growing school

of thought among the experts that the best option is a variable-rate account. Going instead for a fixed rate might mean you get a higher return initially, but if rates start to rise, you won't enjoy the benefits.

Kevin Bray, a banking analyst at Defaqto, said: "With so much uncertainty surrounding when and how quickly the Bank of England base rate will rise, it is difficult for people to judge whether they should opt for longer-term savings options.

"Given this situation, it is important for savers considering fixed-term options to be fully aware of the impact a base rate rise could have."

Mr Hagger at MoneyNet added: "With variable-rate Isas, you can benefit from a tax-free rate but still retain immediate access to your cash should you need it, and some accounts can be opened with as little as £1.

"The Isa market has been a hotbed of activity with providers clambering for those important best-buy places in the hope it will drive large amounts of business as we approach the tax-year crossover."

■ For the best cash Isa rates, visit www.mymoney24.co.uk

In the news

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On the blogs

Adam Aiken: Energy clampdown comes not a moment too soon



A warm welcome for fuel companies' billing change

The gas and electricity regulator is baring its teeth at the industry. **ADAM AIKEN** reports.

The announcement that domestic fuel companies will have to give customers at least 30 days' notice of price increases is the latest salvo in a campaign being waged against suppliers by the energy regulator.

The change, which will come into effect at the end of April, will be a vast improvement from the current system, which allows gas and electricity suppliers to wait up to 90 days before informing people of any price increases.

The news from regulator Ofgem was given a warm welcome by industry analysts.

"If people are going to pay more for their energy, clearly they need to know in advance, not as much as three months later," said Audrey Gallacher, head of energy at Consumer Focus.

"This long-awaited move should help customers to budget for any price rises and make informed decisions early on about whether to switch suppliers."

Lisa Greenfield, energy analyst at Confused.com, said: "It's shocking that currently suppliers don't have to tell their customers until three months after the event. This wouldn't be acceptable with any other sort of financial product and it shouldn't be the case with energy, either."

The latest move by Ofgem follows a recent announcement of a wide-ranging set of proposals which the regulator said would represent a "radical overhaul" of the sector.

Those proposals included sweeping away complex pricing and opening up the market to smaller suppliers, with a threat to the industry of referral to the Competition Commission if it frustrated any reforms.

Ofgem said it found competition was being stifled by a combination of tariff complexity, poor supplier behaviour and a lack of transparency.

In particular, the regulator said the so-called Big Six suppliers had adjusted their prices in response to rising costs more quickly than they cut them when wholesale prices fell.

"Energy companies have failed to play it straight with consumers and so Ofgem is proposing to break the stranglehold the Big Six have over the electricity market by making them auction up to 20pc of their generation output," said Ofgem chief executive Alistair Buchanan.

"This would increase price transparency and make it easier for new players to enter the retail market. Consumers have told us that energy



EMPOWERED TO MAKE A CHANGE: From the end of April, Ofgem is to force domestic fuel companies to give at least 30 days' notice of price increases.

suppliers' prices are too complicated. It is no surprise that they are bamboozled when [the number of tariffs] has increased from 180 to more than 300 since 2008.

"That is why we are planning to sweep away this complexity so suppliers' prices are fully exposed to allow easy price comparisons."

Ms Greenfield, of Confused.com, said more than 50 new tariffs and price changes had been introduced in the past year alone.

"We have been asking for simplification in the energy market for a long time, so it's exciting news to see Ofgem taking steps to tackle the Big Six's pricing and their tendency to push prices up quicker than they lower them," she said.

"Consumer confidence in the gas and electricity suppliers is at an all-time low, at a time when many households are facing higher household bills, so these changes will certainly be welcome news to many."

Scott Byrom, energy manager at Moneysupermarket.com, said: "For years there has been speculation that the speed at which price increases hit consumers is far quicker than the rate at which price decreases are passed on, and Ofgem is finally looking to stop this unfair practice which sees bill payers left severely out of pocket."

"Also under the microscope is the ease of being able to switch energy deals and the clarity of information around this. Ofgem has identified there is much more the energy companies can do to enable customers to shop around and get better deals on their energy, and to stop bill payers forking out more than necessary for their gas and electricity."

The action by Ofgem has support at the top of government. In his recent budget speech, chancellor George Osborne promised to "closely follow developments in the energy sector in the light of the Ofgem review".

“ We have been asking for simplification in the energy market for a long time, so it's exciting news to see Ofgem taking steps to tackle the Big Six's pricing and their tendency to push prices up quicker than they lower them ”

Lisa Greenfield, Confused.com

PICK OF THE WEEK

In association with the experts at **Moneyfacts.co.uk**, we highlight some of the best new products launched this week.

Savings: Tesco Bank

A rate increase of 0.2pc sees Tesco's Two-Year Fixed-Rate Saver deal propelled into the top five of the medium-term market with a rate of 3.85pc. Savers can invest between £2,000 and £1m. Further additions and early access are not allowed. The account can be operated by telephone only by savers aged 18 and over.

Why is it good?

Investors looking to lock funds away for a short term should be pleased with this deal, although as with many bonds investors need to commit for the full term as early withdrawals are not permitted.

Savings: Lloyds TSB

The Two-Year Fixed-Rate Cash Isa deal has increased by 0.45pc to 3.6pc. Savers can invest a minimum of £3,000 and further additions are allowed whilst the issue remains open. Funds can be accessed early, subject to a loss of interest. Transfers in are accepted. The account is available to savers aged 16 and over.

Why is it good?

The rate increase has helped boost its position within the highly-competitive fixed-rate Isa market. Paying 3.6pc, the deal sits just below the current two-year fixed market leader, and should please investors looking for a fixed rate with a degree of flexibility on withdrawals.

Mortgages: Skipton Building Society

Skipton has a new two-year fixed-rate deal at 6.19pc until April 30, 2013. The maximum loan-to-value is 90pc. Second-time and remortgage customers can borrow up to £1m, while first-time buyers can borrow up to £250,000. There is a fee of £195. Remortgage borrowers get free valuations and free legal fees, and flexible features such as payment holidays are available to all borrowers.

Why is it good?

Following its product review last week, Skipton has launched another selection of fixed-rate deals. The high loan-to-value will please borrowers with limited deposits, while the low fee and generous incentives for remortgage customers will help to keep overall costs down.

Mortgages: Hanley Economic Building Society

The Hanley has launched a discounted-rate mortgage at 3.79pc (a 1.4pc discount) for three years. The maximum loan-to-value is 80pc and no fee is payable. Customers can borrow between £30,000 and £500,000. There is the flexibility to make overpayments of up to 10pc of the outstanding balance.

Why is it good?

This new rate offers borrowers with deposits of 20pc or more a rather competitive rate. The lack of an arrangement fee should please borrowers looking to keep their additional costs to a minimum.

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INSIDE THIS WEEK

DAVID Cameron's entrepreneur-friendly schemes have been well received by the University of Kent.

The StartUp Britain and Entrepreneur First campaigns will see millions made available to anyone looking to turn a good idea into a business – a Government-led version of Dragons' Den.

It is right that Government is looking to revive the economy from the bottom up. Let's hope the new start-ups are sustainable enough to pump the Government cash back into the market.

SIMON ROBINSON

BUSINESS EDITOR

TELEPHONE: 01303 817185

EMAIL: simon.robinson@kosmedia.co.uk



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In the zone to combat 'one size fits all' policy

By SIMON ROBINSON

simon.robinson@kosmedia.co.uk

A MOVE to ask the Government to amend its strict enterprise zone policy has been welcomed by Kent business leaders.

The Department for Business said it would locate its 10 remaining start-up zones equally, with no more than one zone per Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) area.

Kent is part of the largest LEP in the country, as it has been grouped together with Essex and East Sussex, leaving the county's most deprived areas with a slim chance of gaining enterprise zone status.

The title comes with associated business perks as firms that choose to set up in enterprise zones benefit through Government incentives such as business discount rates, lenient planning rules and superfast broadband.

Kent County Council leader Paul Carter said the one-for-one ruling has left Kent short-changed and that he would write to the Government in a bid to change ministers' minds.

"It doesn't seem right that, having been encouraged to scale up and form one of the largest LEPs in the country with Essex and East Sussex, we are now being penalised for it," he said.

"Compare that with Oxfordshire, which is a smaller county than Kent yet has its own LEP, and you can see how unfair this ruling is. I don't think they've thought it through and we have a good case to try to get that decision removed. We will protest it and see where it gets us."

Cllr Carter's concerns were reinforced by the Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce.

Chief executive Jo James said: "We've got to put pressure on the Government. It doesn't seem right that we've been forced into forming



UNITY: Paul Carter and Jo James are among those calling for an east Kent enterprise zone

the biggest LEP in the country and are then penalised. The knock-on effects of Pfizer's withdrawal from Sandwich could be devastating, so east Kent is an ideal location for an enterprise zone. The county is a priority and we'd like to reiterate everything Cllr Carter has said."

Andrew Aves, Kent and Medway development manager for the Federation of Small Businesses, said: "Our view is very much that one size should not fit all. This arbitrary allocation is not appropriate for our combined LEP, as there is a serious need that exists in our county, particularly in east Kent."

"Our concern is that this is an area of deprivation that has serious challenges facing it in the

next few years and we hope the Government reconsiders its policy."

Chancellor George Osborne named 11 new enterprise zones, mainly in the North, as part of his spring Budget last week. He ignored east Kent, despite the potential loss of 5,000 jobs as a result of Pfizer leaving Sandwich next year.

Cllr Carter said he had not been expecting the Pfizer site to be among the first 11 zones as he had been told the decision-making process had begun some time before the pharmaceutical giant announced it was pulling out of Kent.

He added that proposals for both a Pfizer enterprise zone and another in the Thames Gateway area were both at advanced stages.

Positive feedback boosts Osborne

THE Chancellor has been given a post-Budget boost with a glowing response from the Institute of Directors (IoD).

A survey of company directors revealed that 58 per cent of those questioned were more confident about the long-term outlook of the economy as a result of the Budget, with only 9 per cent feeling less confident.

Seventy per cent of respondents said they felt the Budget would have a positive impact on the economy, while 55 per cent believed it would have a positive impact on their business.

George Osborne's decision to reduce corporation tax was met with the highest approval rating, with 93 per cent of directors backing the move.

IoD South director Rodger Broad said: "The economic recovery is fragile, so it is good news that business leaders have responded so positively to the Budget."

"While overall there is much to welcome, our region, which alongside London is the only net contributor to the Exchequer, has been overlooked for Enterprise Zone status, which is very

disappointing. The Government really must acknowledge that the South East and its businesses also need support if they are to continue to grow and create the jobs that will drive the UK's economic recovery. There is a real risk of strangling the golden goose."

"At a time when confidence could make the difference between recession and recovery, the IoD's Policy Voice survey suggests that the Budget has improved the outlook for business investment. And at a time when international developments are making people worried, the Chancellor has helped steady nerves at home."

• More feedback from the Budget – see inside.

IOD SURVEY FINDINGS

- 58 per cent are more confident about the long-term economic outlook as a result of the Budget, with only 9 per cent feeling less confident.
- 69 per cent believe Osborne is doing a good job running the economy as Chancellor, while 14 per

cent do not think that he is doing a good job.

- 70 per cent believe the Budget will have a positive impact on the economy, with only 6 per cent believing it will have a negative impact.

- 55 per cent believe the Budget will have a positive impact on their business, with only 8 per cent believing it will have a negative impact.

- 93 per cent believe reducing the main corporation tax rate to 26p this year and 23p by 2014 will be positive for the economy, with 74 per cent stating it will be positive for their businesses.

- 43 per cent think the increase in the lifetime limit for entrepreneurs' relief from £5million to £10m will be positive for their businesses.

- 48 per cent think the improvement to the capital allowances for short-life assets will be positive for their businesses.

- 81 per cent think increasing the limits for investment under the Enterprise Investment Scheme is a positive step.

- 65 per cent think moving an increase in fuel duty to an increased tax on North Sea oil production when the oil price is high is a positive step.

Comment

CHANCELLOR George Osborne came through his second Budget speech relatively unscathed, thanks in main to a savvy petrol-price cut.

Having urged the public to assess him on his growth results this time last year, and having failed to deliver, Osborne had to prepare for the Opposition sharpening their knives ahead of his follow-up House of Commons address.

Osborne was forced to announce revised growth forecasts for 2011, down from 2.1 to 1.7 per cent, and was met with howls of derision from the Opposition benches.

These howls intensified when Osborne moved on to his hard-hitting headline-grabbers, which he preceded with the in-it-together line: "We're all suffering in this recession".

Labour MPs were quick to ask just how much the Chancellor, the heir to the Osborne & Little wallpaper multinational, is suffering.

But to Osborne's credit, he refused to be fazed and delivered the remainder of his Budget, including his fuel-cut ace-up-the-sleeve, with purpose and poise.

The following day's headlines focused on the fuel-duty cancellation and 1p fall at the petrol pumps, rather than on Osborne's failure to hit his self-imposed targets or revised growth figures.

Perhaps the Chancellor is this government's Teflon Tony, to whom nothing will stick? Time will tell, but what is clear is that his Budget was largely well received on a number of fronts.

His help for housing, enterprise zones and discounted business rate measures were all welcomed by Kent businesses in last week's Business Week.

With the combined effect of winter snow and Middle East troubles hindering the UK's recovery from recession, Osborne has been given time to get the country back on track.

It is now up to him and his policies to deliver the goods – leading to sustained growth in 2011/12.

If his third Budget figures are as bad as his second, I don't think even a 10p drop in fuel prices could paper over the cracks.

SIMON ROBINSON, Business Editor
Twitter: @KOSbusiness



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Cruising into the new season



THE Port of Dover welcomed the first cruise ship of the year this week. The AIDACara docked in town on Monday before departing for Hamburg, Amsterdam and Antwerp.

Its passengers are among 240,000 cruise enthusiasts set to stop off in the county this year. The cruise industry has boomed in recent years, with routes out of Dover to Europe and the rest of the world.

Holland America Line (HAL) has this year added a luxury Dover to New York service. Port of Dover commercial and marketing head Kate O'Hara said she expected demand to rise further still.

"The beginning of a new season is always an exciting

time for us as the cruise terminals are reopened to travellers," she said. "Staff are eager to welcome not only new and returning visitors, but ships and crews on their inaugural visit to our port and town."

"First-class levels of service, excellent facilities and a wide range of cruise holidays available mean Dover will cater for all types of cruise traveller as well as contributing to the growth in European cruising that is winning new converts each season."

"Our repeat customers already know that there's no better way to start a European cruise than sailing into the sunset against a backdrop of the White Cliffs."

Hi-tech answers for a low-carbon future

A SCIENCE company has achieved a world first by developing an eco-friendly, carbon dioxide-capturing recycling technology.

Carbon8 Systems' unique accelerated carbonation process – 10 years in the making – captures CO₂ from landfill gas and also produces aggregate for the construction industry.

The Chatham Maritime-based team's new technology sees methane emitted by decomposing waste burnt in a specially-designed boiler to generate a CO₂-rich gas stream.

This is then used to treat the harmful ash left over from waste incineration to make concrete blocks.

Carbon8's managing director, Dr Paula Carey, said: "Accelerated carbonation has a significant environmental impact in that it prevents a hazardous waste going to landfill, reduces the need for natural aggregate and captures carbon dioxide from the environment, helping to



ECO-FRIENDLY: Carbon8 Systems

fight climate change. Our technique not only renders polluted waste and soils inert, it is also low-cost and extremely fast – taking just minutes, rather than the days or even weeks required by other methods.

If widely adopted, these processes could be responsible for capturing more than one million tonnes of waste carbon dioxide and contributing to achieving the UK carbon emission reduction target."

The company has recently licensed the technology for the treatment of incinerator ashes in the UK to a new company, Carbon8 Aggregates, which is securing funding for its first commercial plant.

Exploring

Carbon8 Systems is now exploring opportunities in the US and Canada, where it already has patents, and in Europe and Australia, with assistance from UK Trade and Investment (UKTI).

UKTI South East's Terry Enga said: "The global market for low-carbon goods and services is an ever-growing one, already worth over £3 trillion and expected to exceed £4.5 trillion by 2015."

"The work and research conducted by the team at Carbon8 is truly pioneering."

"With the Government keen to reduce CO₂ emissions and carbon footprint, services like those at Carbon8 are going to be more in demand than ever before."

Smart wristbands coup at Coachella



A CONTRACT to supply hi-tech wristbands for a US music festival has been won by a Tunbridge Wells security firm.

ID&C will provide the radio frequency identification (RFID) wristbands for California's Coachella Festival, taking place this month.

RFID – used in Transport for London's Oyster cards – uses radio waves to exchange data between a reader and an electronic tag attached to an object, in this case a wristband.

ID&C's operations director Steve Dalys said: "Using RFID technology

to improve security and reduce admission times at festivals is a concept we've been working on for years. Being able to see it in action at a festival like Coachella will be amazing."

"From a security point of view, the microchips can't be copied, making it difficult for pass-backs and counterfeiters."

"For fans, it's a non-invasive way of admittance, making the experience enjoyable from the moment they arrive."

ID&C has developed a durable, waterproof RFID-enabled wristband

fitted with its patented Smartlock system, providing Coachella with what the firm calls "the ultimate security and admission solution".

The wristbands will work with hi-tech entrance gates, which read the unique frequency without physical contact.

The system can admit 2,000 fans per gate per hour, reducing staffing costs.

ID&C has supplied security wristbands for major UK festivals including Glastonbury, V and Kent's Hop Farm Festival.

BUSINESS WEEK

online: www.businessforkent.co.uk

ACCOUNTANCY practice A4G has launched a new profit and cashflow improvement service.

The firm, based in West Kingsdown, near Sevenoaks, hopes to help a range of recession-hit companies.

A4G's Steve Brown said: "This new service provides business-owners with the opportunity to examine the recent performance of their business and help to achieve profitable growth and improve their cash position."

"We will be looking to make your business more valuable as profits increase, reduce costs and help you sleep at night, knowing your business can meet its debts when they fall due. We offer 'Improve and Grow' sessions which are part of the service, and all who sign up for it will come away with an action plan of what will need to happen next, with the option of follow-up consultations."

The cost starts at £250, excluding VAT. Visit www.a4gsolutions.co.uk for more information.

THE team behind a successful school meals social enterprise is offering support to others wishing to follow suit.

Whole School Meals Ltd, which provides meals to 21 schools in east Kent, is holding a conference at St Margaret's Bay, near Dover, on Friday, May 13. Chairman Stephanie Hayman, who set the firm up in 2005 with support from local schools, said the model could be copied.

"The social-enterprise model has so much to offer," she said. "We are owned and controlled by our school community through their majority ownership of the company."

"Who better to ensure that we always maintain standards and never lose sight of our purpose? Although we must always be financially viable, we are able to spend more on the things we value – such as training for cooks and their teams, sourcing local produce, maximising use of fresh ingredients. And best of all, our profits go right back to the community."

The conference will be at Pines Calyx. For more information, visit www.wholeschoolmeals.co.uk.



NATWEST has appointed Jason Morgan as regional director of business banking throughout Kent and the Thames Gateway area.

Morgan (above, second left, with his newly-appointed team), will assume responsibility for all new business start-ups and business customers with an annual turnover up to £2 million.

He said: "I'm thrilled to have been given the opportunity to lead such a talented team. Their experience and knowledge will allow us to build on our reputation for supporting business customers."

LEGAL advisers Vertex Law have scooped a second industry award in as many months. The Kings Hill-based firm picked up the Regional M&A Law Firm of the Year prize at the DealMakers Global Awards.

Last month, they were confirmed as the winners of Kent Law Firm of the Year 2010 at the Corporate INTL Magazine Awards.

The firm's Salim Somjee said: "We are delighted our efforts continue to be recognised, both regionally and nationally."



CHRIS GRAYLING

Health and safety 'red tape' review

HEALTH and safety laws will be stripped down under new Government plans to ease the regulatory burdens on business.

Employment Minister Chris Grayling announced that a full review will be carried out with a view to scrapping any measures that are not needed.

Responsible employers will also no longer face automatic health-and-safety

inspections, cutting the number of safety spot-checks by at least a third.

Grayling said: "Of course it is right to protect employees in the workplace, but Britain's health-and-safety culture is also stifling business and holding back growth. The purpose of health-and-safety regulation is to protect people at work, and rightly so. But we need common

sense at the heart of the system and these measures will help root out the needless burden of bureaucracy."

"This will help us make Britain a more growth-focused, entrepreneurial nation. By reducing unnecessary red tape we can encourage businesses to come and invest in the UK, creating jobs and opportunities when we need them most."

Cameron pushes the enterprise button



LET'S GO:
Prime Minister David Cameron has launched the StartUp Britain campaign, which is backed by Kent University

A GOVERNMENT initiative to support and encourage the next generation of entrepreneurs has been backed by the University of Kent.

The new Entrepreneur First scheme will see business-minded students given support and guidance with help from leading employers.

It will also pay for the creation of enterprise societies in every university in the country.

The student scheme forms part of the wider StartUp Britain campaign, launched by Prime Minister David Cameron, which will see millions of pounds given to would-be entrepreneurs.

University of Kent enterprise director Carole Barron said: "These schemes will help pave the way for some of our brightest and best graduates to become the next wave of entrepreneurs."

"Universities like Kent are already creating the right climate to encourage entrepreneurial spirit – 91 per cent of higher-education institutions provide extra-curricular support for student and graduate entrepreneurship, and 80 per cent offer awards and modules leading to academic qualifications in enterprise and entrepreneurship."

"This announcement will provide further impetus for graduates to release their potential and learn entrepreneurial skills under the guidance of estab-

By **SIMON ROBINSON**

simon.robinson1@kosmedia.co.uk

lished employers. Here at the University of Kent we are doing everything possible to ensure that there are as few bureaucratic hurdles as possible to ensure our graduates are given the best opportunities to become successful entrepreneurs."

Unveiling the scheme, Mr Cameron said: "If you've been turning over a good idea for years, now is the time to make something of it."

"If you're working for a big firm but know you could do a better job on your own, now is the time to make the leap. If you're dreaming about starting up the next great British brand, now is the time to make it happen."

"There are thousands of people out there who are entrepreneurs, but they just don't know it yet."

"There are millions of success stories that haven't been written yet. So seize this moment. Take these opportunities. Make it happen and together we can drive our economy forward."

StartUp Britain has so far gathered the backing of international brands including Barclays, BlackBerry, Experian, Intel, Microsoft, McKinsey & Co and Virgin Media.



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Policy 'undermines incentive to work'

NEW policy changes affecting the amount of cash that bankrupts can keep from their earnings will take away their incentive to work and put a greater strain on family life, says one of Kent's leading insolvency practitioners.

Amanda Ireland, who is also a partner at the Sittingbourne office of chartered accountants McCabe Ford Williams, said it was now even more essential that those in financial difficulty should seek expert advice from a licensed insolvency practitioner before deciding to make themselves bankrupt, or allowing creditors to force them into bankruptcy.

"I deal with cases every day where people are making a genuine effort to get their lives back to normal after accumulating large debts. Thankfully, we are able to help the vast majority of them, but these changes in policy remove the incentive to work hard," said Ireland.

The Insolvency Service policy used to be that the Official Receiver would look at the household income of a bankrupt and calculate what he deemed would be required to cover the "reasonable domestic needs" of the bankrupt and their family.

He would then claim between 50 and 75 per cent of any surplus income for the estate, the percentage being dependent on the level of surplus, with the bankrupt being allowed to retain the balance.



AMANDA IRELAND

"If the surplus was £50 or less, the Official Receiver made no claim on the funds," said Ireland.

With effect from December last year, the Official Receiver is reducing the minimum payment he would expect to receive from £50 to £20 and will only allow the bankrupt to retain £10 per month for emergencies for himself and each dependent.

"This onerous change takes away a bankrupt's incentive to work and is going to put even greater strain on family life," she said.

• Amanda Ireland can be phoned on 01795 479111 or by email at amanda.ireland@mfw.co.uk

At centre stage

KOSmedia BUSINESS WEEK

THE BIG INTERVIEW

Business Week talks to JAMES TILLITT about his work in restoring the much-loved Astor Theatre in Deal back to its former glory. The Astor features strongly in the affections and memories of many residents of the seaside town.

After a career in theatre – and relocation to the Kent coast – US-born Tillitt took the decision to renovate the Astor to allow a venue for local activities and clubs, as well as a top-class performance space. While work continues, the Astor is once again among the premier facilities in east Kent. NICK AMES reports.



WHEN James Tillitt, a veteran of the stage, moved to the coastal town of Deal, he was immediately struck by how much affection local people had for its theatre.

At the time, the Astor was owned by Dover District Council and in a bad state of repair. "In fact, it was falling apart" he said.

"I thought what a terrible waste of such a valuable community resource."

So Tillitt decided to mount a rescue bid and for more than a year the town has seen the venue once again thriving. Classes and sessions are held on a daily basis and high-profile acts have sold out the theatre.

Now it is run as a Community Interest Company – which means any profit gained from ticket sales, the bar or merchandising is immediately ploughed back into running costs and improvement work, which is still ongoing.

No public funding or grants are available for the Astor, so it has to be completely self-sustainable. Tillitt is now artistic director – and said it was thanks to local residents and their enthusiasm that the arts centre was once more a focal point of Deal.

"It quickly became apparent that the Astor holds a very special place in the hearts of a lot of people who live in the town," he said.

"Almost everyone who lives locally has some special memory or connection with the place.

"I have had little old ladies come up to me and say they remember attending ballet classes in the 1950s.

"Then there are those who remember the 1970s and the disco nights. They might remember their first kiss, or their first drink.

"One man told me how he met his wife at the theatre."

But bringing the Astor back to former glories represented a major challenge and called on a mixture of theatrical know-how and business acumen on the part of Tillitt and those who supported his aims and objectives.

"I first bought a home in Deal 11 years ago," he said. "It was initially a place for the weekend. I was a 'down from London' type.

"But in 2006 I came here permanently and it was then I started to realise how important the theatre was.

"It wasn't being used very much at all and was, I have to say, extremely badly managed.

"Dover District Council were the owners and so I set about seeing how I could rescue it. The first stage was to get hold of the lease and I approached some like-minded people to come and work alongside me.

"I went to Dover [council] and said I would like to take on the theatre and it did take a



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REVIVING BREW: James Tillitt in the bar at the Astor Theatre

in Astor Theatre rebirth

while to persuade them, but we were awarded the lease in September 2008."

A group called Deal Arts Management, with Tillitt one of the prime movers, now had control of the Astor, subject to terms and conditions on how they went ahead with development work insisted on by councillors.

"Our first stage was to conduct a survey and we soon discovered the whole place needed to be rewired," said Tillitt.

"The old boiler had to be condemned and the basement was flooded. In fact, the whole place was barely fit to be used. So our first job was to get it to a stage where it was of a standard that meant the public could actually come inside."

So far about £130,000 has been spent on the theatre, but there is still some work to be done and fund-raising activities continue. There is a bucket for donations on the bar.

"We were very grateful for the help we received," said Tillitt. "About half the money we have spent up until now came in the form of grants from Dover District Council, Deal Town Council and Kent County Council.

"We raised our own funds through staging events and applying to grant-giving bodies.

"We received a very nice boost in the form of an anonymous donation of £20,000 from an individual and after seven months of restoration work we were able to open our doors to paying customers, in January 2010.

"We had a whole programme of events which ran right through until July of that year.

"The following month we closed down in order to finish off our work. This included repainting, relaying the floors and introducing new lighting."



GOOD SIGN: The Astor is thriving

Tillitt said he felt it was important that the Astor was used as much as possible, so activities take place in the day involving local groups, as well as performances of an evening.

"We have a huge range of things going on here and there really is something for everyone," he said.

"There are adult education classes, creative-writing courses, life drawing, youth theatre, a rock choir and a Gilbert and Sullivan society.

"We have a close association with a music label, Smugglers Records, and they stage a regular folk evening.

"One event that always sells out is the Private Widdle Social Club, an evening of entertainment which takes its name from one of the characters played in a Carry On film by Charles Hawtrey, a one-time Deal resident.

"There are also local bands performing, with Raw Deal – heavy metal and punk – a particularly popular night.

"We have ensured that we have booked some big bands. Nine Below

Zero have played here, so have The Strawbs, The Blockheads, Dr Feelgood and Wishbone Ash. Hazel O'Connor is on this weekend [Saturday, April 2].

"Another event we are introducing is Talking Books, which involves an author speaking about his, or her, work to an audience.

"Simon Booker, Deborah Moggach and Melanie McGrath, who are all local writers, are set to take part, as are The History Girls, three women authors who specialise in historical fiction. They will be explaining how to take real people from the past and make a fictional story about them.

"We also work alongside Canterbury Christ Church University. Music students put on performances to gain experience of playing in front of an audience.

"The theatre holds 150 if we put in rows of seats. Cabaret-style seating, which includes tables, means 120 people can be accommodated, while if it's standing room only, capacity is 350.

"Our latest project has been an arts space and bar which has just opened with a photographic exhibition."

Tillitt feels that the Astor is now back firmly in its previous place, as a major part of a town with a growing arts scene and with many writers, painters, photographers and musicians among its residents.

"It has become a focal point for the community once again," he said.

"Everyone here has rallied round and been behind what we have done and they have all been a part of it.

"I'm proud of what we have achieved and to have this sort of arts centre in a town the size of Deal and with the support of all the community is a rare thing. It is very gratifying, but the whole project has been a real challenge to get where we are now, to say the least."



DEAL-MAKER: James Tillitt moved to the coastal town in 2006

JAMES TILLITT'S CV

- Brought up in the city of Minneapolis, US, and came to Britain in 1975 to attend the Rose Bruford drama school in Sidcup

- Spent 15 years working as an actor, mainly in musical theatre. Productions included Jesus Christ Superstar and Fiddler On The Roof. Performed on the London stage and in touring productions

- In the 1980s film Hellbound: Hellraiser 2, he plays the part of a police officer who discovers dead bodies in a house

- Set up production companies and was involved in writing and directing

- Plays staged in schools, where companies and charities have commissioned Tillitt to write scripts which put across a particular message in a way that is immediately understandable to young people. One, called Bottlebusters, on recycling and was performed throughout the UK for 13 years

- Has held post of general manager of Kent Opera



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BUSINESS WEEK

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High praise as restored hotel's Regency charm pleases minister

A RESTORED seafront hotel has been relaunched with the help of the Government's tourism minister.

John Penrose was on hand to open the 81-bed Best Western Dover Marina Hotel and Spa.

The tourism and heritage chief paid tribute to owner Leaf Hotels for its work in restoring the building to its Regency best.

"This is a listed building and it has been sensitively and carefully renovated. It is clear you have honoured the heritage and history of this fine old building," he said.

"At the same time you have managed to create what is clearly going to be one of the premier hotels in the area.

"This is a facility Dover and Kent will be proud of. I wish we had more people of vision in our tourism industry.

By **SIMON ROBINSON**

simon.robinson@kosmedia.co.uk

"We need people like Leaf Hotels, we need more people who are prepared to do precisely what you have achieved here."

The hotel, formerly known as The Churchill, caters for weddings, meetings and conferences, plus theme nights and fine-dining parties, private dining and other functions.

General manager David Otteson said: "With views across the beach and harbour to the Channel and beyond, we have an unrivalled location close to ferry and cruise terminals and Dover marina. The hotel is full of character and charm and ideal for business and leisure."

Leaf Hotels directors Mr Rajamenon, Mr Rajaseelan and Mr Rajakanthan said they had been overwhelmed by messages of support at the hotel's opening.



FINE OUTLOOK: Tourism minister John Penrose enjoys the view from the balcony after opening the Best Western Dover Marina Hotel and Spa. **INSET:** With Leaf Hotels directors

Mr Rajamenon said: "Dover is the gateway to Britain and that is why it is so important the town has high-quality tourist attractions and hotels, so visitors are given a good reason to stop and enjoy what the area has to offer."

"We are keen to play our part in that and want other people involved in the tourist industry in the area to work more closely together so we do not miss out on the benefits

of international tourism.

Mr Rajaseelan said: "The town deserves to have the best hotels and we believe huge benefits will come from this project."

"We want it to become the centre of the community. We also want local businesses to see the Dover Marina Hotel and Spa as the place to come for a meeting or a conference, to meet with clients and associates."



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Awards take some beating



KENT Invicta Chamber of Commerce has introduced a rhythmical feature into its annual awards – an audience-participation drumming session.

Finalists were invited to add to the beat laid down by the Drum Café African drumming group.

A spokesman said: "The group revealed that under the tables was a drum for each person at the table."

"Everybody joined in with enthusiasm and, led and encouraged by the drummers, soon picked up basic skills they never knew they had."

The top award on the night, business of the year, went to Bedfont Scientific, with Reeves & Co and Mather & Smith named as finalists.

Most promising new business was Recruitment Genius; and entrepreneur of the year went to Dan Maudhub, of the Wonderful Creative Agency.

Chamber chairwoman Jo James said: "I hope everybody enjoyed themselves – I certainly did. The quality and quantity of applications received each year goes to show what an entrepreneurial county we work in."

The awards ceremony was held at Canterbury Cathedral Lodge.

KENT INVICTA

Chamber of Commerce Awards winners

- Excellence In Customer Service
Winner: D & D Auto Repairs
Finalist: Woodley Coles LLP
Finalist: Nova IT Solutions
- Excellence In People Development
Winner: Medway Safety
Finalist: Secure Engineering
Finalist: Medash Signs
- Most Promising New Business
Winner: Recruitment Genius
Finalist: Sleeping Giant Media
Finalist: Nova IT Solutions
- Entrepreneur of the Year
Winner: Dan Maudhub – Wonderful Creative Agency
Finalist: Wayne Hodgson – Red Eagle
Finalist: Steve Gerring – Medway Safety
- Business of the Year
Winner: Bedfont Scientific
Finalist: Reeves & Co LLP
Finalist: Mather & Smith

BUSINESS WEEK SPOTLIGHT FINANCE

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Striking the right balance with 'impressive' Budget

By **SIMON ROBINSON**

simon.robinson@kosmedia.co.uk

CHANCELLOR George Osborne's second Budget has been welcomed by Kent Science Park, with businesses particularly impressed by a £100 million UK science-sector funding pot.

James Speck, director at the Sittingbourne park, said the cash would help support the UK's scientific firms and make them more competitive against their overseas peers.

Subsidiary measures such as the reduction in corporation tax were also praised.

Speck said: "It's good to see the Government is committed to UK science. The £100 million of capital spending announced is a welcome boost for the scientific sector at a time when money is hard come by."

Priority

"However, the rest of the world, and in particular China and Germany, continue to invest heavily in science and it's important that, as the deficit is reduced, R&D spending remains a Government priority to ensure that we do not fall behind our competitors."

"The new research and development tax credit proposal and increases to tax credit will be another boost for the UK."

"I believe the Chancellor is striking a good balance between managing the personal hardships that many people are feeling because of the spending cuts and supporting business in a way that will establish the framework for economic recovery."

"The reduction in corporation tax by 2 rather than 1 per cent is a welcome surprise. It sends a signal to the world that the UK is a good place to come and do business and I



CHANCELLOR: £100m capital spending pot

applaud the Chancellor's efforts to create the most competitive tax system in the G20.

"The freezing of new regulations for start-ups and businesses employing fewer than 10 people for the next three years is good news."

"I know from speaking to our tenants that this will help to take some of the pressure off by minimising the amount of red tape they encounter and letting them get on with expanding their business."

Crowe Clark Whitehall tax partner Simon Warne was also impressed with the Budget.

"Most companies will view the Budget as business-friendly thanks to the decision to cut corporation tax," he said.

"The measures to give earlier relief for capi-



JAMES SPECK: Welcome boost for science

tal expenditure via the short-life asset regime will be welcomed by hard-pressed business-owners. The increased R&D relief will focus business minds on innovation, as will the patent box regime, expected to apply a 10 per cent rate of corporation tax on income from patents from April 2013," he said.

"Kent appears to have missed out on the first of the newly-created enterprise zones, although we may yet benefit."

The Marketing Eye's managing director, Neil Edwards, was wary of rising inflation and the expected rise in interest rates.

"George Osborne is saying a lot of the things that small businesses want to hear. Making Britain the best place to start up, finance and

grow a small business has to be the right aim," he said.

"However, service businesses in the South East never seem to get a mention and we need a helping hand, too."

"For our business to grow, we need confidence in the economy and people willing to invest in their businesses."

"Despite Osborne talking about 'economic stability', there is still a lot of uncertainty out there. Rising inflation rates and threats of increases in interest rates don't help."

"In the absence of confidence, we need our costs held down and the ability to leave as much profit in the business as we can to re-invest – not paying it all out in tax."

Creaseys partner Richard Holme said: "We were encouraged to learn that corporation tax is to be cut by 2 per cent, rather than the 1 per cent originally announced, and then cut to 23 per cent by 2014."

Highlight

"This can only be good news for business and will, hopefully, encourage investment."

Another key highlight is that investments under the enterprise investment scheme will attract tax relief of 30 per cent.

"This is a good step in the right direction to getting people to invest in small and growing business. This is essential to kick-start the economy and will also encourage serial entrepreneurs to keep investing. Investment is key to success."

"As a firm which works closely with a number of charities, we were encouraged by the announcement of a 10 per cent inheritance tax discount for those leaving 10 per cent of their estate to charity."

"The charity sector is suffering at the moment, so anything that can be done to give it a boost is good news."

"It's also positive for people who wish to leave part of their estate to charity."

SOFTWARE provider Access UK is gearing up for a period of rapid expansion after securing a £50 million deal with growth investor Lyceum Capital.

The established firm – which has nine offices across the UK, including its HR and payroll arm in Canterbury – will use the huge sum to grow the business, buy out complementary firms and continue product development.



Chief executive Chris Bayne, left, said: "It's fitting that on the 20th anniversary of Access's incorporation we've agreed a deal which

marks a significant step change in the speed and scale of the business's expansion and secured the backing of an investment partner with an outstanding track record of generating sustainable growth."

"We'll be focused on the continued development of our market-leading product and service portfolio through

Access even more areas with software firm's £50m deal

a combination of in-house development and the targeted acquisition of complementary solutions and will be looking to further develop our offering across the mid-market space."

Jeremy Hand, who led the deal for Lyceum Capital, said: "Access is a highly attractive company with a successful operating model, proven management team and a strong position in the rapidly growing business segment of the software market. This deal will give the business the funding and additional insight and expertise to broaden its services and penetrate further into key vertical industries."

Access is a software, solutions and consultancy house that provides a full range of enterprise-resource-planning software and services, with a particular focus on financial management systems and human-capital management solutions.

It serves a 5,000-strong mid-market client base spread across a range of sectors and includes Canterbury College, the King's School and Cripps Harries Hall LLP. Set up in 1991, Access has grown to become a £28m turnover business. The firm has nine offices across the UK and Ireland and employs more than 300 people.

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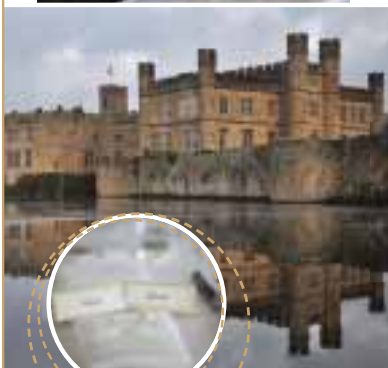


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NEXT WEEK: Business Week Spotlight will focus on Investment and Funding



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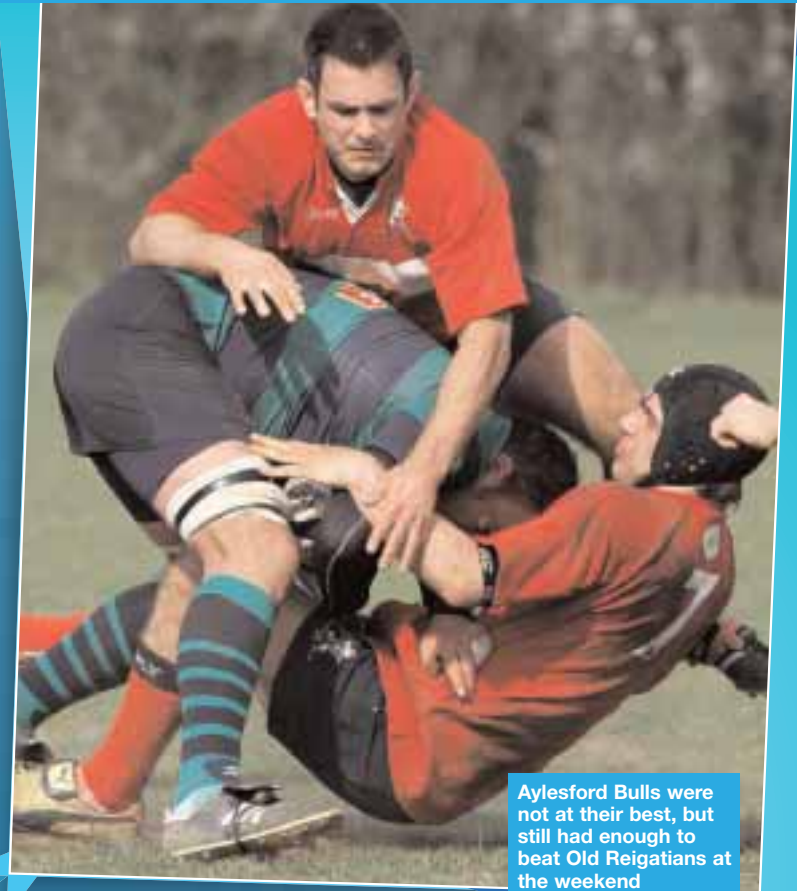
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Sport



Maidstone United secured back-to-back wins for the first time this season, plus news on how close the club are to raising the £1.6 million needed to build a new ground in the county town



Aylesford Bulls were not at their best, but still had enough to beat Old Reigatians at the weekend



Maidstone RFC have altered their coaching structure as they look to rebuild following relegation this season



Rally driver Louise Cook found the going tough at the Bulldog International Rally of North Wales

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BIDDENDEN CIDER IS PRODUCED IN KENT'S OLDEST COMMERCIAL VINEYARD, FROM FARM PRESSED KENTISH APPLES, AND HAS WON CMRA CIDER OF THE YEAR AWARD. THE LOVELY WEALDEN VILLAGE OF BIDDENDEN IS FAMOUS FOR THE LEGEND OF THE CONJOINED BIDDENDEN MAIDS, BORN IN 1100, WHO ESTABLISHED A CHARITY TO HELP THE POOR THAT CONTINUES TO THIS DAY.

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